

**No-Fly Zones:
An Effective Use of Airpower,
Or Just a Lot of Noise?**

by

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ABSTRACT

Military intervention invariably raises four questions – when, where, why, and how. Since Operation Desert Storm in 1991 the United States has answered “how” with airpower, in the form of no-fly zones, in the two most troubled regions of the post-Cold War world: Iraq and Bosnia. These ongoing operations are a crucial component of U.S. foreign policy, and represent a significant expenditure of American military resources; therefore, how effective have no-fly zones been in achieving U.S. objectives, and are they a valid tool for American policy makers? This working paper attempts to answer those two questions, by assessing the events leading to the creation of the two no-fly zones in Iraq and the no-fly zone in Bosnia, the effectiveness of each no-fly zone, the impact of no-fly zones on American foreign and defense policies, and the viability of no-fly zones in future scenarios.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	1
WHAT IS A NO-FLY ZONE?	2
THE IRAQI NO-FLY ZONES.....	5
THE BOSNIA NO-FLY ZONE.....	17
NO-FLY ZONES AND AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY.....	25
NO-FLY ZONES AND AMERICAN DEFENSE POLICY.....	48
NO-FLY ZONES – 1998 AND BEYOND.....	55
CONCLUSION.....	65
NOTES.....	68
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	78

No-Fly Zones: An Effective Use of Airpower, or Just a Lot of Noise?

“It is one thing to say that you are going to enforce a no-fly zone over Bosnia or Iraq; it is quite another to explain why”¹

*General John Shalikashvili
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*

Why indeed? At first the answer may appear self-evident – after all, the purpose of a no-fly zone is fairly apparent: to prevent flight within a nation, such as Bosnia, or areas within a nation, such as Iraq. But what is accomplished by the prevention of flight, and what does a no-fly zone contribute to American foreign policy? This paper will examine the no-fly zones established by the United States and United Nations since 1991, evaluate their effectiveness, review their impact on American foreign and defense policies, and determine the utility of similar no-fly zones in future scenarios.

By their nature, no-fly zones and the prohibition of flight serve a limited purpose; when accompanied by other measures, both military and political, the combined effects may achieve vital national objectives. These other measures may include economic sanctions, ground forces, embargoes, inspection teams, naval blockades, and various different means of influencing an adversary's actions or policies. This paper focuses solely on the role played by no-fly zones and airpower as an adjunct to these measures, and does not delve into the impact of each initiative on overall national strategy or the attainment of policy goals. Rather, the paper attempts to determine if, after six years of enforcement, no-fly zones have proven their value, or if they've only succeeded in turning jet fuel into noise.

What is a No-Fly Zone?

A no-fly zone is a designated area in which flight by a specific nation or entity is prohibited by another nation or entity. There are no existing legal definitions or criteria for a no-fly zone, and no historical precedents prior to 1991.² In its current context, a no-fly zone restricts a state from flight within all or a portion of its sovereign airspace; however, at the discretion of the enforcing state or organization, this prohibition may be extended to regions beyond national boundaries. A no-fly zone may be established by *démarche* from one nation to another, as are both no-fly zones in Iraq, or by United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR), as in Bosnia. In addition, a no-fly zone may be imposed as an operational policy, subject to enforcement and military action, or established as a declaratory policy, and not subject to enforcement. The no-fly zone in Bosnia was initially a declaratory policy, established by UNSCR 781 in October 1992; it was subsequently converted to an operational policy by UNSCR 816 in April 1993, and thereafter enforced by NATO aircraft.³

Since early this century airpower has been used to enforce mandates, support foreign policy, impose a nation's will, or fight a nation's wars. In war, the nation that controls the air will control the ground; the forceful elimination of an enemy's capability to wage war in the third dimension is a combat application of the no-fly concept. No-fly "zones" are a recent development, distinctive from traditional airpower missions by their imposition in another nation's airspace, absent of war, surrender, or occupation. Among the first similar uses of airpower in this role were the British Royal Air Force Air Control operations over Somaliland, Mesopotamia, and Aden between the two World Wars.⁴

This mission enforced colonial rule, ensured unmolested travel and sanctity of trade routes, and generally maintained order among the Arab tribes in the region.⁵ While superficially resembling today's operations in Iraq, the Air Control mission differed greatly: the Arab tribes had no Air Force, no air defenses, and no sovereignty.

No-fly zones emerged – not coincidentally – at the end of the Cold War. The bipolar nature of conflict during that period, in which the two superpowers confronted each other in proxy wars across the globe, negated the possibility of a no-fly zone policy; the imposition of this instrument by one would have been strongly contested by the other. The demise of the Soviet Union as the traditional adversary of the United States and other western nations enabled uncontested imposition of the first no-fly zone in Iraq in 1991. Correspondingly, the recent re-emergence of Russian interests and influence in the Persian Gulf has complicated American use of airpower in that region.⁶

A no-fly zone is viewed by some as an “air occupation,” and by others as an “air intervention.”⁷ In the former, the legal implications of the term “occupation,” and the inherent responsibilities of an occupying nation, raise a difficult issue that should relegate the use of the term to all but the most general of descriptions or discourses.⁸ In the latter, conventional and moral implications of the term “intervention” are both at issue. The Westphalian tradition of non-intervention and respect for the sovereignty of individual states is central to contemporary international relations and the United Nations charter; only a nation's right to self-defense or a threat to international peace and security as outlined in Chapter VII can override this guiding principle.⁹ Morally, an intervention presupposes *jus ad bellum*, which except for genocide, is often difficult to derive and inevitably favors one combatant over another.¹⁰ These considerations notwithstanding,

the commonly understood definitions of "occupation" and "intervention" appropriately describe the function of a no-fly zone.¹¹

Air "occupation" is a limited objective, and a qualified concept; airpower doesn't occupy a nation, nor does it occupy territory – it occupies airspace, and thus controls territory. Within this realm airpower can restrict the transit of aircraft to varying degrees, conduct surveillance, airdrop supplies, or simply contain an opponent's forces while constraining his will. It can deny a nation's aerial sovereignty, and have a devastating effect on its political, economic, military, and human condition. It can affect transportation, telecommunication, television, and radio – all without the destructive use of force. If necessary, a no-fly zone can escalate beyond observation or patrol, and provide the means to conduct offensive bombing operations. But as a limited application of airpower, a no-fly zone also has a limited capability to affect a determined adversary, willing to undergo privation, restrictions, and humiliation. Limited objectives *may* only require a limited use of force, but a limited use of force *can* only achieve limited objectives.

A no-fly zone is, if nothing else, a highly visible means of political and military engagement, without the immediate risks of combat. It is a clear signal that a nation is willing to support its policy objectives by a commitment of its resources and reputation, and potentially sacrifice the lives of airmen in the pursuit of its goals. Since 1991, the United States has sent that signal on three occasions by establishing two no-fly zones in Iraq and supporting the United Nations no-fly zone in Bosnia. What follows is a retrospective of these no-fly zones, describing the events that led to their creation, their evolution since 1991, and their current status.

The Iraqi No-Fly Zones

Operation Provide Comfort

In March 1991 the United States and its Gulf War coalition partners were savoring the victory over Saddam Hussein's forces in Operation Desert Storm. The cease-fire initiated by President Bush on February 28th had held, following the short ground offensive that liberated Kuwait and routed Saddam Hussein's forces. On March 3rd Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz forwarded a letter to the United Nations, indicating Iraq's intention to fulfill its obligations under UNSCR 686, which established temporary terms for the cease-fire.¹² American forces, some of which had been deployed since August the previous year, were eagerly looking forward to going home. The war had been mercifully short, and casualties had been far lower than expected.¹³ Saddam Hussein was on the ropes, and President Bush's popularity was higher than ever; it was a triumph of American military might and American foreign policy.¹⁴

On March 3rd, the same day Iraq agreed to UNSCR 686, another event took place that would have a significant, long-term impact on United States foreign policy. Near Safwan airfield in Iraq, General Norman Schwarzkopf met with a group of Iraqi generals to negotiate the military details of the cease-fire. During the meeting Lieutenant General Sultan Hashim Ahmad, the Chief of Staff of the Iraqi Ministry of Defense, obtained permission from Schwarzkopf to fly helicopters throughout non-occupied Iraq.¹⁵ This concession by Schwarzkopf quickly turned controversial, for although he was certainly misled by the Iraqis and their stated intentions, he was also quick to surrender a

significant military advantage to an enemy in need of every weapon in its inventory.¹⁶

The consequences of Schwarzkopf's decision proved disastrous to Kurd and Shiite factions in Iraq, who were in open rebellion against Saddam Hussein.

The success of the coalition forces against Iraq ignited an internal revolt by Shiite Muslims in the south and Kurds in the north. President Bush's exhortation on February 15th to the Iraqi populace to "take matters into their own hands...there will be no pause, there will be no cease-fire," led many Shiites and Kurds to assume they would have U.S. military support in their fight against Saddam.¹⁷ The United States, however, was not interested in a partitioned Iraq; it favored a removal of Saddam from power, but not at the expense of territorial integrity.¹⁸ This policy was strongly supported by the Arab nations in the Gulf, and particularly by Saudi Arabia, which feared an independent, pro-Iranian entity on its northern border.¹⁹ Turkey, a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and a geostrategically crucial United States ally, was equally opposed to the creation of an independent Kurdistan in northern Iraq.²⁰ Consequently, when Iraqi forces launched a vicious counterattack on the Shiites following the Safwan meeting, the United States did little beyond offer sympathy and condemn Saddam for his brutality against his own people.²¹

The Shiites felt betrayed, not only by President Bush's refusal to support them with American forces, but by the reluctance of the United States to take action against the helicopter gunships that now attacked them. The President, however, was resolute in his decision to avoid "getting sucked into the internal civil war inside Iraq," going as far as to say that even if the helicopter flights were a violation of the informal cease-fire, "that doesn't necessarily mean that we are going to commit our young men and women into

further combat."²² But as reports came in of the growing slaughter, President Bush faced mounting criticism of his refusal to involve the United States in the conflict, or to revoke the provisions of the Safwan arrangement. By the end of March Saddam had crushed the Shiite rebellion, and was turning his forces northward against the Kurds. Far from succumbing to the uprisings, Saddam was now firmly and ruthlessly re-establishing control in Iraq – and using his airpower to expeditiously achieve his objectives.

The Gulf War had dealt a devastating blow to the Iraqi Air Force, resulting in a loss of hundreds of fighter aircraft to air combat, destruction on the ground, and flight to Iran. Nonetheless, at the end of the war approximately 400 fighter aircraft and 440 helicopters remained operational in Iraq, a still formidable threat to the Shiites and Kurds.²³ The informal cease-fire prohibited flight by fixed-wing aircraft, a restriction that was reiterated on March 15th by General Schwarzkopf in a warning to the Iraqi government.²⁴ On March 20th and 22nd the United States Air Force enforced this restriction by shooting down two Iraqi fighters.²⁵ This action wasn't taken because the aircraft had entered a no-fly zone, for neither that terminology nor concept had yet been conceived, but because they posed a threat to American fighters and were in violation of the cease-fire agreement. Helicopters, however, did not pose a threat to the coalition forces and were not attacked, even though they often flew over 100 sorties a day against the rebels.²⁶

Saddam's repression of the Kurds resulted in a tremendous exodus from northern Iraq; over 2 million refugees streamed towards the borders of Turkey and Iran.²⁷ As they fled the Iraqi forces, helicopters and fighters pursued them, attacking with gunfire, napalm, and phosphorous bombs.²⁸ The tragic scenes of starving and freezing Kurds in

the mountains of northern Iraq and Turkey could not be ignored by President Bush, who faced increasing domestic and international pressure to come to their assistance. In Turkey, the long-standing problem with the Kurdish minority was being greatly exacerbated by the half million refugees on the border. Turkish Prime Minister Turgut Ozal insisted that the United States intervene in the crisis, calling President Bush three times in two days to state his position.²⁹ On April 5th, President Bush announced that the United States would commence airdrop operations to the refugees in northern Iraq. Other initiatives, including a multilateral humanitarian ground mission, were initiated after coordination with the British, French, Turks, and other members of the coalition.³⁰

The President's action came two days after passage of UNSCR 687, which established the terms of the formal cease-fire with Iraq.³¹ Resolution 687 was an extensive document that outlined Iraq's obligations to enact the cease-fire and eliminate the economic sanctions imposed by UNSCR 661. Among the many provisions of UNSCR 687 were the elimination of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction (WMD), the establishment of a special commission to oversee the elimination of Iraq's WMD capability, the recognition of Kuwait and its borders, and compensation for damage caused by Iraqi aggression.³² UNSCR 687 did not, however, establish an enforcement mechanism for its many provisions, nor did it address the issue of Iraqi repression of the Kurds and Shiites. France had attempted to link UNSCR 687 and the lifting of sanctions to Iraqi treatment of the Kurds, but was rebuffed by the United States and other permanent members of the UN Security Council, who treated the French initiative as a threat to the passage of the cease-fire resolution.³³ On April 5th, however, the same day President Bush announced that the United States would join an international effort to help

the Kurds, the security council passed the "French Resolution"³⁴ – UNSCR 688 – condemning the repression of the Iraqi civilian population and the Kurds.³⁵ This resolution became crucial to the United States justification for the establishment of the first no-fly zone in northern Iraq, and would be used again in 1992 for establishing a second no-fly zone in southern Iraq.

On April 6th, the United States issued a *démarche* to the government of Iraq that prohibited the flight of all aircraft, fixed- or rotary-wing, north of the thirty-sixth parallel.³⁶ The stated purpose of this no-fly zone was to *protect allied aircraft* participating in Operation Provide Comfort, the humanitarian mission established to assist the Kurds in northern Iraq. Since UNSCR 688 didn't specifically establish the no-fly zone, the United States relied on the provisions of UNSCR 678, passed in November 1990, which authorized member nations to use "all necessary means" to effect the withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait and "restore international peace and security in the area."³⁷ The repression of the Kurds was viewed as a threat to the peace and security of the area, and thus all necessary means, including the enforcement of a no-fly zone, was justified. Any Iraqi aircraft that entered the zone were subject to attack under Article 42, Chapter VII, of the United Nations Charter, which authorized the use of force to restore or maintain peace.³⁸ In addition, under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, Allied aircraft patrolling the no-fly zone were authorized the right of self-defense, and could attack Iraqi aircraft that posed a threat to them.³⁹

Aircraft participating in Operation Provide Comfort operated from Incirlik Air Base in Turkey, approximately 400 miles west of the border with Iraq. The enforcement of the no-fly zone was accompanied by a vast humanitarian effort on the ground,

consisting of U.S., British, and French forces, as well as UN personnel and non-governmental relief organizations. Their task was daunting, as the number of refugees on the Turkish border had grown to over one million.⁴⁰ The mission was further complicated by internal divisions among the Kurds, primarily between two rival political factions, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK). In addition to these two groups, there also existed an organization engaged in a terrorist campaign against Turkey, the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK). Operation Provide Comfort was anathema to many military and political figures in Turkey, who viewed it as a means of sheltering the PKK, and potentially leading to an independent Kurdish state in northern Iraq.⁴¹ Only the support of President Ozal made it possible to establish Operation Provide Comfort, a position for which he would later suffer politically.⁴²

Operation Provide Comfort's no-fly zone was effective in eliminating flights by Iraqi fighters and helicopters north of the thirty-sixth parallel. Following the departure of U.S. ground forces from northern Iraq in June 1991, American, British, and French aircraft continued to patrol the airspace, protecting the Kurdish factions and allowing them to maintain a semi-autonomous status. In January 1993, hostile actions by Iraqi forces resulted in attacks by U.S. aircraft on Iraqi anti-aircraft and surface-to-air missile sites, and the downing of an Iraqi fighter. Following these exchanges, the situation in northern Iraq between the coalition and Saddam Hussein would remain static until 1996.⁴³

Operation Southern Watch

In August 1992 the situation in Iraq was far different from that of a year earlier; Saddam Hussein was firmly in control, having crushed rebellions in the north and south, and recently purged his army following a failed coup.⁴⁴ Iraq was not complying with the provisions of the cease-fire resolution, and had blocked inspections for weapons of mass destruction by the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM).⁴⁵ In southern Iraq, Saddam's forces had stepped up their attacks on the Shiites, using helicopters, fighter aircraft, and over eight divisions of ground forces.⁴⁶ More ominously, Iraqi print and broadcast media were once again asserting that Kuwait was a province of Iraq.⁴⁷

In response to Iraq's growing belligerence and the brutal repression of the Shiites, the United States imposed a second no-fly zone in Iraq, south of the thirty-second parallel. The United Kingdom and France supported this U.S. initiative which, like the no-fly zone in northern Iraq, was not presented to or voted upon by the UN Security Council.⁴⁸ As with Operation Provide Comfort, the U.S. based the authority for the no-fly zone on Iraq's refusal to comply with UNSCR 688.⁴⁹ On August 26th, President Bush announced the commencement of surveillance missions in southern Iraq to "monitor the situation there...where a majority of the most recent violations of Resolution 688 have taken place."⁵⁰ The no-fly zone was concurrently imposed to "facilitate these monitoring efforts," and would "remain in effect until the coalition determines that it is no longer required."⁵¹ The same day a *démarche* was presented to the Iraqi Ambassador to the United Nations, notifying him that the no-fly zone would become effective in 24 hours.⁵²

been concluded. Confrontation with the Iraqis since January 1993 had been minimal, consisting only of a few minor skirmishes. The tragic deaths of 26 personnel in the downing of two American Blackhawk helicopters by U.S. fighters in April 1994 was the most significant event in the history of the operation. Violations of the no-fly zone were almost non-existent; the aircrews who patrolled northern Iraq were well past tedium, and equated their daily regimen to the movie *Ground Hog Day*, in which the main character relives the same day over and over.⁵⁸

The two predominant Kurdish organizations in the safe haven, the KDP and the PUK, had been unable to maintain a common governing organization. Discord had turned to violence, as both organizations struggled for control of the Kurd enclave and a share of the profits from contraband trade that passed through the region.⁵⁹ In a move intended to increase its power base, the PUK allied itself with Iranian forces, which entered Iraq and provided them with weapons for their fight against the KDP.⁶⁰ The United States, which had been brokering talks between both factions, condemned the Iranian incursion but did not choose sides in the conflict. As a result, the KDP asked Iraq to intervene on their behalf. The United States, which had been monitoring an Iraqi troop buildup south of the thirty-sixth parallel, warned the Iraqi government on August 28th and 30th not to intervene in the Kurdish situation.⁶¹ Disregarding the warnings by the United States, and at the KDP's request, Saddam's forces moved into northern Iraq on September 1st and secured the town of Irbil.

The United States responded to the Iraqi aggression by attacking Iraq twice with cruise missiles and expanding the southern no-fly zone northward to the thirty-third parallel. On September 3rd and 4th Navy ships, a submarine, and Air Force B-52s

launched a total of 44 cruise missiles against targets located in southern Iraq; no missiles were employed against targets or forces in northern Iraq.⁶² The intent of the attacks and no-fly zone expansion was to "make Saddam pay a price for the latest act of brutality, reducing his ability to threaten his neighbors and America's interests."⁶³ Accordingly, the cruise missiles were targeted specifically against potential threats to coalition aircraft in the newly enlarged southern no-fly zone, which constrained Iraqi operations to a 200-mile wide strip, running west to east across the center of the country.⁶⁴ The larger no-fly zone also prevented the Iraqi Air Force from using a training area and two airfields that were located within the new boundaries.⁶⁵

In many ways, however, Saddam Hussein came out ahead in this confrontation. Operation Provide Comfort was now irrevocably damaged; both Kurdish factions had effectively broken with the West, and Operation Provide Comfort's Military Command Center in northern Iraq had retreated to Turkey. Operatives of the Central Intelligence Agency in northern Iraq had been forced to flee, and many of the Kurds who had worked for the United States were evacuated to Guam.⁶⁶ In contrast to the minimal damage caused by the cruise missiles, the damage to the coalition was substantial.⁶⁷ Among the Arab states there was widespread disapproval of the United States attack, in what was primarily viewed as an internal Iraqi matter.⁶⁸ France also criticized the attacks, and did not allow its aircraft to operate above the thirty-second parallel, in the expanded portion of the southern no-fly zone.⁶⁹ Less than four months later, on December 25th, Operation Provide Comfort was terminated by the Turkish government and replaced with Operation Northern Watch, which maintained the no-fly zone, but eliminated the humanitarian

mission in Iraq. France refused to support Operation Northern Watch without a ground-based humanitarian mission, and withdrew its aircraft and personnel from Turkey.⁷⁰

Saddam's success in 1996 spurred him onto greater challenges to the United States, the coalition, and the United Nations in 1997. In April the southern and northern no-fly zones were violated by Iraqi helicopters carrying pilgrims returning from the Hajj to Mecca; the United States wisely allowed the flights to proceed, and thus avoided a potentially inflammatory and tragic response to Saddam's provocation.⁷¹ The presence of reporters aboard the first two helicopters clearly highlighted Saddam's intentions, which were far from religiously motivated.⁷² In June, Iraq prohibited the UNSCOM team from inspecting suspected weapons sites, resulting in the passage of UNSCR 1115, condemning Iraq for the flagrant violations of previous UN resolutions. Among these violations was the smuggling of oil exports through Iran, which tripled in volume between March and November.⁷³

No-fly zone violations soared during September and October of 1997, following an Iranian Air Force attack on rebel positions at al-Khalq, inside Iraq. At first acting under the pretext of responding to the Iranian fighters, the Iraqi Air Force systematically and repeatedly violated the northern and southern no-fly zones for several weeks. According to President Clinton, it was clear that "Iraq's purpose was to try and test the coalition to see how far it could go in violating the ban on flights in these regions."⁷⁴ Even though the U.S. Air Force already had over 100 aircraft in the area, the violations reached a level where the aircraft carrier Nimitz was expedited to the Persian Gulf to help enforce the no-fly zone.⁷⁵ This action was among the measures taken by President Clinton and Secretary of Defense William Cohen to "cut down [the Iraqi] ability to

simply skip across the no-fly zone."⁷⁶ These measures, however, did not result in the shootdown of any Iraqi aircraft, an unexpected outcome given the number of violations. The United States also requested a larger presence at Incirlik Air Base to combat the no-fly zone violations in northern Iraq, but the Turkish government did not approve an increase in aircraft until early November; by then, the violations had ended.⁷⁷

Saddam's success in splitting the coalition in 1996 was the turning point in the post-war course of events in Iraq. Iraqi belligerence, obfuscation, and deliberate non-compliance with UN resolutions progressively increased in the months following the occupation of Irbil and the meagerly supported and ineffectual U.S. response. One can only wonder how circumstances may differ now, had more forceful and consolidated action been taken against Saddam in northern Iraq.

The Bosnia No-Fly Zone

The breakup of Yugoslavia in 1991 precipitated the bloodiest European conflict since the Second World War. Although viewed by many as an area irrelevant to U.S. vital interests, American forces would nevertheless be drawn into the fray by the horrific and genocidal slaughter of non-combatants. The extent of U.S. participation, however, was very limited. So too were the results – until the rules were changed to allow greater freedom of action.

Operation Deny Flight

Slovenia and Croatia were the first republics to secede from Yugoslavia, declaring their independence in the summer of 1991. Fighting soon broke out, as the Yugoslav army attempted to prevent Slovenia and Croatia from establishing autonomy. The Slovenian forces were well equipped and prepared for war, and quickly defeated the Yugoslav army. In Croatia, the Serb minority also took up arms, determined to prevent the secession of their state, or barring that, to establish an enclave that could one day be united with a greater Serbia.⁷⁸ The Croatian conflict lasted until January 1992, when a truce was signed between the two factions. The United Nations, which had created a small peacekeeping force to oversee and facilitate the implementation of the cease fire provisions, established the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in February 1992, in the hope it would “create the conditions of peace and security required for the negotiation of an overall settlement of the Yugoslav crisis.”⁷⁹ Before long, however,

UNPROFOR would become deeply involved in the growing, multi-ethnic conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina.⁸⁰

Bosnia's secession from Yugoslavia in March 1992 ignited the war between the Bosnian Serbs, the Bosnian Muslims, and the Bosnian Croats. The Bosnian Serbs established the Serb Republic, and with the support of the Yugoslav army, quickly overran the less able Muslim and Croat forces. The Bosnian Serbs were aided in their campaign by air support from fighters and helicopters, which were flown from airfields in Bosnian Serb and Croatian Serb territories. Sarajevo, the Bosnian capital, came under attack by Serb forces, which lay siege to the city in the hills surrounding it. In response to the deteriorating situation, the UN established a relief effort for Sarajevo and expanded the role of UNPROFOR, to include peacekeeping operations in Bosnia. In late June European aircraft began an airlift operation into Sarajevo, flying in much needed food and humanitarian supplies.

The initial United States foray into the Bosnian conflict consisted of airlift missions to Sarajevo in April 1992. These initial missions were quickly terminated when conditions near the airport became too dangerous to continue.⁸¹ In July, President Bush commenced Operation Provide Promise, a full-scale humanitarian mission to Bosnia in support of the UN relief operations. American C-130 aircraft joined European airplanes in daytime airlift missions to Sarajevo and nighttime airdrop missions to isolated regions of Bosnia. These aircraft were often subject to attack by ground fire, which halted the mission on several occasions. Although no American aircraft or lives were lost, four Italian crewmembers were killed when their aircraft was shot down by a suspected Bosnian Serb surface-to-air missile in September 1992.⁸²

The threat to airlifters was not restricted to surface weapons, however, as Serb aircraft often shadowed the larger transport planes during their flights over Bosnia.⁸³ Knowing that Muslim and Croat forces would not fire at the transports, the Serbs used them as a shield during their missions. These acts, along with the destruction caused by Serb aircraft to Muslim villages and civilians, prompted the United Nations to pass UNSCR 781 on October 9th, 1992, banning flight in Bosnia by all military aircraft not assigned to UNPROFOR or assisting UN operations.⁸⁴ This no-fly zone was a declaratory policy only; the United Nations did not enforce the ban, relying instead on NATO AWACS aircraft to monitor the region and report infractions.⁸⁵

A large number of infractions followed the establishment of the no-fly zone, as Serb forces violated the resolution with impunity. As if to make their point, Serb aircraft bombed the town of Gradacac one day after the imposition of the no-fly zone.⁸⁶ In the months that followed, Serb violations of the no-fly zone would reach into the hundreds, prompting a strong American push for enforcing the UN resolution.⁸⁷ The British and French, who had ground troops participating as members of UNPROFOR, were reluctant to pursue this option, in fear that reprisals against Serb aircraft would place their forces in danger. Continued Serb aggression and violations of the no-fly zone, including the participation of Yugoslav aircraft, eventually convinced the European nations to support enforcement. On March 31st, 1993, the United Nations passed UNSCR 816, banning flight in Bosnia by all fixed and rotary wing aircraft not authorized by UNPROFOR. More importantly, it authorized member states, "acting nationally or through regional organizations," to take "all necessary measures...to ensure compliance with the ban."⁸⁸

NATO aircraft began enforcement of the no-fly zone on April 12th, naming the mission Operation Deny Flight. Violations by fixed wing aircraft dropped off, but were never completely eliminated; violations by helicopters, however, continued unabated throughout the period of enforcement. Difficulties in detecting the low flying craft were compounded by the uneven terrain and frequent bouts of poor weather. Serb helicopters were often painted with red crosses, preventing their shutdown if intercepted.⁸⁹ On other occasions civilians were flown aboard the helicopters as a means of dissuading attack.⁹⁰ Even if intercepted, a warning was required by NATO aircraft prior to the use of force, giving the helicopters time to land and avoid engagement. The blatant disregard for the ban was best exemplified by the Bosnian Serb Commander of Forces Ratko Mladic, who toured Serb positions in a helicopter as UN military observers looked on.⁹¹

Paradoxically, the numerous helicopter violations of the no-fly zone had little effect on the combat situation, or the outcome of the conflict. Realizing this, and fearful of a fratricidal shutdown or the potential loss of civilian lives, NATO commanders restricted pilots from attacking helicopters.⁹² The only use of force against aircraft violating the no-fly zone occurred on February 28th, 1994, when U.S. fighters intercepted and shot down four Serb aircraft that were bombing a Muslim munitions factory.⁹³ The singular success of that mission, however, was offset by the advantage the Bosnian Serb ground forces enjoyed against their Muslim and Croat opponents. The no-fly zone effectively "took the war out of the skies," but even without fixed-wing air support, the Serbs controlled over two-thirds of Bosnia by April 1994.⁹⁴ Under the initial rules of engagement, NATO aircraft could only attack in self-defense, and could not intervene when Serb forces fired on UN declared safe areas or endangered UNPROFOR personnel.

This restriction, once lifted, would prove to be of far greater eventual consequence to the Bosnian conflict, as NATO airpower expanded its roles to include Close Air Support (CAS) and Offensive Air Support (OAS).⁹⁵

In June 1993 the NATO foreign ministers authorized the use of alliance aircraft for CAS missions in support of UNPROFOR. Two months later, NATO's North Atlantic Council also approved OAS missions in support of Sarajevo, UN designated safe areas, and other locations within Bosnia.⁹⁶ The CAS/OAS request process was diplomatically engineered to require both UN and NATO approval before a mission could be executed. This process, known as the "dual-key" procedure, was established to ensure that American influence over the NATO forces engaged in Deny Flight did not lead to unilateral use of force in Bosnia.⁹⁷ The dual-key procedure required the UN secretary-general's approval for OAS missions, and his special representative's approval for CAS missions. This arrangement, described as "tortuous" by Secretary of Defense William Perry and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs General Shalikashvili, was less than optimum for the rapid nature of a CAS mission.⁹⁸ The inevitable delays in the UN approval process resulted in minimal support for UNPROFOR personnel.⁹⁹ One of the few CAS missions flown took place on July 11th, 1995, when NATO aircraft came to the aid of UNPROFOR peacekeepers in the safe area of Srebrenica – two days after the initial request for help; because of the UN delay in approving the mission it proved ineffective, and the Serb forces overran the city.¹⁰⁰

Offensive Air Support missions did not require the rapid execution of a CAS mission, but the dual-key process impacted NATO's capability in another fashion. Since the targets for an air strike required both UN and NATO approval, Secretary-General

Boutros-Ghali had veto authority over any planned attack. Boutros-Ghali was concerned with potential retaliation against UNPROFOR in response to air strikes, which was demonstrated by the Serb taking of UN hostages following an April 1994 CAS attack; he was also influenced by the hesitation of certain NATO members to wholeheartedly support strikes against the Bosnian Serbs.¹⁰¹ The reluctance of the secretary-general to use force, and his predilection to limit its extent when applied, clashed with U.S. and NATO desires to maximize the effectiveness of its airpower.¹⁰² Only six OAS missions took place between August 1994 and August 1995, a meager precedent for what would be the largest use of airpower in the Bosnian conflict – Operation Deliberate Force.

The Turning Point in Bosnia – September 1995

Throughout 1995 the Bosnian Serb forces had grown increasingly bolder and more defiant of the United Nations. Following an air strike on a Serb ammunition depot on May 25th and 26th, Serb forces took 370 UN peacekeepers hostage, in some cases chaining them to potential targets as human shields.¹⁰³ All were released by June 18th, after which peacekeepers in Bosnia were withdrawn from isolated areas, diminishing their vulnerability to capture. On June 2nd Serb forces shot down an American F-16 patrolling the no-fly zone, but did not capture the pilot, who was rescued six days later. Violations of the no-fly zone by Serb aircraft became more frequent, but NATO requests to retaliate were denied by the UN. When Serb forces overran the safe area of Srebrenica in July, the North Atlantic Council determined the time had come to take a more decisive stance.

The foreign ministers of the intervening nations met in London on July 21st to discuss the ongoing conflict in Bosnia. At this meeting a consensus was reached to pursue a vigorous air campaign against the Bosnian Serbs if the city of Gorazde was attacked. The North Atlantic Council, taking a cue from the ministers' meeting, approved plans to support the attacks, but expanded the trigger actions to include attacks on the safe areas of Sarajevo, Bihac, and Tuzla. The UN secretary-general, sensing the unanimity and determination of the council, relinquished control of his "key" to the commander of UNPROFOR. This greatly streamlined the command, control, and approval process for the NATO air forces; within weeks, the actions of the Bosnian Serb forces put the new procedures into operational practice.

Following a mortar attack in Sarajevo on August 28th that killed 37 civilians, NATO initiated Operation Deliberate Force. After a 24-hour waiting period to allow UN peacekeepers to find shelter from allied bombs and Serb retaliation, NATO air forces launched a devastating series of attacks on Bosnian Serb facilities and strongholds. The operation spanned 22 days, 12 days of which comprised the bombing. When completed, 3,515 sorties had been flown, 1,026 weapons had been employed, and 48 targets had been hit.¹⁰⁴ In addition to the precision weapons dropped by aircraft, cruise missiles from a U.S. Navy vessel were also used against Serb targets. On September 20th NATO and UN commanders ended Operation Deliberate Force, having achieved their four primary objectives: reduction of the threat to the Sarajevo safe area; and deterrence of further attacks there and at other safe areas; the withdrawal of Bosnian Serb heavy weapons from the exclusion zone around Sarajevo; complete freedom of movement for UN forces and personnel and non-governmental organizations; and unrestricted use of the Sarajevo

airport. Following Operation Deliberate Force two additional attacks occurred in October 1995 against Serb facilities; since then, however, NATO forces in Bosnia have not conducted any air strikes, nor have any aircraft been shot down in the no-fly zone.

The successful 1995 land campaign by the Croat and Muslim Federation, which reduced Bosnian Serb territory from 70% to just over 50%, combined with Operation Deliberate Force and intense diplomatic efforts by U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke and his team, resulted in the gathering of the warring parties in Dayton for peace talks in November, 1995. The Dayton Peace Agreement was signed on November 21st, establishing the Bosnian Serb Republic and Federation of Bosnia as two entities within the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In December 1995 Operation Deny Flight was terminated, along with UNPROFOR's Balkan mission; NATO thereafter assumed complete responsibility for the military provisions of the Dayton Peace Agreement. The no-fly zone remained in effect as Operation Decisive Endeavor, in support of Implementation Force and Operation Joint Endeavor. In December 1996 Implementation Force was terminated and replaced by Stabilisation Force; Operation Joint Guard replaced Operation Joint Endeavor, and the no-fly zone mission was renamed Operation Deliberate Guard. The no-fly zone continues to be monitored by NATO patrols, although training flights by Bosnian military aircraft are allowed with prior coordination and permission from the NATO Air Forces South commander.¹⁰⁵

No-Fly Zones and American Foreign Policy

No-fly zones have been a tool of American foreign policy since 1991, established and modified to conform to the unique political dynamic in which they were applied. While the military objective in each case was to prevent flight within specified airspace, the political objectives were varied and influenced by both domestic and international interests. As could be expected, these variations had a tremendous effect on American airpower and its mission of enforcing the no-fly zones. Carl Von Clausewitz, in his treatise On War, stated that "If war is part of policy, policy will determine its character."¹⁰⁶ In the last decade of the twentieth century, his words apply most aptly not only to war, but also to another continuation of politics – the no-fly zone.

Turkey

Operation Provide Comfort was profoundly influenced by the U.S. alliance with Turkey, whose NATO membership and geostrategic location were vital to American interests and policy. The inability and unwillingness of the Turkish government to support hundreds of thousands of Kurdish refugees in the aftermath of Operation Desert Storm was central to the establishment of the humanitarian relief effort and no-fly zone in northern Iraq. President Ozal was quick to remind President Bush of the support Turkey had provided the Gulf War Coalition during the conflict; his persistent requests for American intervention, combined with French demands for action, disparaging CNN

images of refugees, and mounting domestic criticism of the administration's policy of non-interference, abruptly reversed the U.S. position.

In separate news conferences on the two days preceding the announcement of the relief mission, President Bush strongly reiterated his opposition to American intervention in the Kurdish oppression, stating "I feel a frustration and a sense of grief for the innocents that are being killed brutally. But we are not there to intervene. I am not going to commit our forces to something of this nature. I'm not going to do that."¹⁰⁷ Less than 48 hours later, President Bush announced that "...Turkey [is] threatened by an enormous amount of refugees pouring across their border," and, as a result, "We are going to do what America has always done, and that is, when people are hurting and being brutalized, we're going to help."¹⁰⁸ With the passage of UNSCR 688 that day and the *démarche* to Iraq the next, the way was paved for American, British, and French aircraft to begin their patrols of Iraqi airspace.

The concept of a no-fly zone was new to the U.S. Air Force; there was no precedent or doctrine for this mission, but the objective was similar to long-established procedures for combat air patrol, albeit with different rules of engagement.¹⁰⁹ The duration of the operation was indeterminate, but President Bush's comments that this effort was "not intended as a permanent solution," but was "an interim measure designed to meet an immediate, penetrating human need," leaves little doubt as to the administration's initial optimism for a short-lived intervention.¹¹⁰ These affirmations were almost certainly buttressed by the President's conviction that Saddam Hussein would soon be deposed by elements within Iraq.¹¹¹

Many Turkish politicians and military officers did not share President Ozal's support of American intervention in northern Iraq.¹¹² They believed that the Kurdish safe haven was a progenitor to an independent Kurdistan, and that it afforded protection to the PKK, a terrorist organization that the Turkish army had battled since 1984.¹¹³ Although the United States did not support Kurdish independence, and strenuously advocated the territorial integrity of Iraq, Turks viewed the establishment of the safe haven as a *de facto* partitioning of that nation.¹¹⁴ The establishment and election of a Kurdish parliament in 1992 did little to assuage their fears.¹¹⁵

The opposition of the Turkish General Staff to Operation Provide Comfort and the use of Incirlik Air Base would prove nettlesome to American policy makers, and frustrating to American airmen. From the onset, Turkish officials viewed the mission of Operation Provide Comfort solely as reconnaissance, which precluded the use of force except for self-defense.¹¹⁶ Turkey's interests were not served by attacks against Iraq, which was a major source of revenue prior to Operation Desert Storm, and with which it desired to re-establish trade following the war.¹¹⁷ Turkey also benefited from the long-standing Iraqi domination of the Kurds and the suppression of Kurdish movements towards autonomy; the PKK, not Iraq, was regarded as the main threat to Turkish security.¹¹⁸ Turkey was also reluctant to further antagonize a nation with whom it shared the region, which had shown a predisposition to develop weapons of mass destruction and to use them, and with which it would continue to co-exist after Operation Provide Comfort was terminated. Regional stability, suppression of the PKK, and economic concerns were more important to Turkey than American desires to contain and constrain Saddam Hussein.

This conflict in national interests would affect American foreign policy and the no-fly zones throughout the duration of Operation Provide Comfort and Operation Northern Watch. The value of Turkey as an ally and the American desire to contain Saddam Hussein gave Turkey a decided amount of leverage over United States policy in northern Iraq. The Clinton administration's influence was further weakened by congressional refusal to sell ten Cobra helicopters and transfer three frigates to Turkey, an act which was viewed by many Turkish military officers and civilian officials as an undeclared U.S. arms embargo on Turkey.¹¹⁹ In 1996 American policy makers were faced with another challenge as the first non-secular government in the 73-year history of the Turkish Republic came to power, headed by Islamist Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan. Erbakan's coalition government kept Turkish security issues in the hands of the secularists and military, but his strong anti-Western stance and oft-repeated disfavor of Operation Provide Comfort rendered the American position more vulnerable than at any time since the Gulf War.

Though Turkish military and political officials generally resented Operation Provide Comfort, the parliament consistently voted for its extension when submitted for approval every six months. The reasons for this apparent contradiction were twofold: authorizing the continuation of Operation Provide Comfort gave Turkey desired influence with the United States, which strongly favored the mission; and Operation Provide Comfort allowed Turkey to wage a fierce anti-terrorist campaign against PKK enclaves in northern Iraq. General Cevik Bir, the deputy Chief of the Turkish General Staff, defined the purpose of cross-border operations against the PKK as "vital to the security of Turkey," intended to "eradicate the region from the terrorists and to prevent their future

deployment."¹²⁰ The United States, which declared the PKK a terrorist organization, strongly supported "Turkey's efforts to deal with the threat posed by the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) terror."¹²¹

Turkish Army incursions into northern Iraq in pursuit of PKK strongholds were conducted during the time frame of Operation Provide Comfort and Operation Northern Watch, as were attacks by Turkish fighter aircraft against PKK positions in northern Iraq.¹²² American, British, and French aircraft were not permitted to fly Operation Provide Comfort missions during those times when Turkish fighters were attacking the PKK in Iraq.¹²³ This restriction often resulted in short-notice Operation Provide Comfort mission cancellations, and reduced the surveillance time over Iraq by coalition aircraft. It also lent an air of absurdity to American policy and the notion of a "safe haven," which protected all the Kurds in northern Iraq, only to have Turkish forces bomb PKK positions in the same area. The hypocrisy of Turkish policy, which did not allow coalition aircraft to conduct offensive bombing operations against Iraq, and yet routinely attacked PKK positions in Iraq, was a sore point with American pilots and senior Air Force leaders.¹²⁴

The limitations imposed by Turkey on the coalition forces inevitably conflicted with the Clinton administration's ability to contend with Iraqi aggression. At no time was this more evident than during the September 1996 occupation of northern Iraq, when Saddam's forces dealt a decisive political blow to the United States; in only a few days, the network established by the United States to support the overthrow of Saddam Hussein had been eradicated, and over 100 Kurds executed.¹²⁵ The United States response, Operation Desert Strike, launched 44 cruise missiles at targets in southern Iraq and expanded the southern no-fly zone northward to the thirty-third parallel, but took no

action in northern Iraq. According to then Secretary of Defense William Perry, and former Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller, the United States never asked to use the coalition air forces in Turkey for attacks on Iraq.¹²⁶ This is not surprising, for to do so would have put one of the United States' most vital allies in the embarrassing position of saying "no" to its most important benefactor. In contrast to the United States, Turkey had nothing to lose by withholding retaliation against Iraq: the Kurds were fighting amongst themselves, and not with Turkey; the Iraqis had been invited by the leader of the KDP to intervene on their behalf; and an attack by Iraq on Turkey would trigger an Article V response from NATO.

In effect, American foreign policy was held hostage by another government's ability to dictate the means of engagement. Turkish politics and policies, while allowing for the continuation of Operations Provide Comfort, severely restricted the extent to which coalition forces could use the airpower assembled at Incirlik Air Base. These impediments in turn affected the ability of the United States to back its foreign policy with a credible use of force, against an adversary who had consistently demonstrated a lack of cooperation if not threatened by military action. Predictably, the United States did not use aircraft assigned to Operation Provide Comfort in retaliatory attacks against Iraq. After years of flying sorties from Incirlik in support of the no-fly zone, the inherent advantage of a forward air presence was negated by Turkish restrictions and the unwillingness, or inability, of the American administration to obtain permission to use the airbase or its assigned aircraft for staging attacks against Iraq. In the words of Alan Makovsky, former U.S. State Department liaison officer and political advisor to Operation Provide Comfort, the operation had shown itself to be a "flying paper tiger."¹²⁷

In addition to Turkish policy, two other factors played a key role in determining the U.S. response to Saddam in 1996. President Clinton was reluctant to attack Iraqi forces that had sided with the KDP, as this would have indicated support for one Kurdish faction over another, and potentially embroiled the United States in a civil war.¹²⁸ Overshadowing any decision, however, was the upcoming presidential election in November. As Secretary Perry stated the day of the first attack on Iraq "One of the great advantages of the cruise missiles is the minimal threat to the U.S. forces involved."¹²⁹ It is unlikely that President Clinton looked favorably upon the possibility of casualties, or American prisoners of war on Iraqi television, with only two months remaining in the campaign.¹³⁰

The occupation of northern Iraq by Saddam's forces, and the United States response to his aggression, illustrated the consequences of applying limited force and its inability to achieve more than limited objectives. The no-fly zone, while effective in preventing flight within northern Iraq, was unable to prevent a ground offensive because of political constraints and ill-defined American policy. Not surprisingly, the limited response of cruise missile attacks, while costing over 100 million dollars, produced meager results and was widely criticized as "feckless, pin-prick air strikes against repairable targets."¹³¹ President Clinton, Secretary of Defense Perry, United Nations Ambassador Albright, and other members of the administration strongly emphasized that Saddam had paid a high price for his actions – not by the cruise missile attacks – but by the strategic loss incurred by the expansion of the southern no-fly zone. Many, including the Director of Central Intelligence, John Deutch, disagreed; in his remarks before the

Senate on September 19th, he stated that "Saddam Hussein had gotten stronger politically."¹³²

American vital interests in the Persian Gulf came into question during this episode, particularly in the weeks following Operation Desert Strike. Statements by White House Press Secretary Mike McCurry in the days immediately preceding the attacks were resolute in defining the area of northern Iraq as vital to United States interests.¹³³ However, following the attacks Secretary Perry unequivocally stated that there were no American vital interests in northern Iraq, only in the south.¹³⁴ By shifting the focus away from the north, and emphasizing the actions taken to enhance Operation Southern Watch, the administration hoped to deflect the growing criticism of its response to the Iraqi aggression. This position became policy; far from losing value in the aftermath of Saddam's occupation of northern Iraq, the southern no-fly zone gained importance, being described by Secretary Perry and others as the "linchpin" of containment.¹³⁵

American policy towards Iraq and its northern provinces has not wavered in the 20 months since Operation Desert Strike; containment remains the Clinton administration's approach to Saddam Hussein. Turkish policy has also not changed; when faced with Saddam's refusal to allow UNSCOM inspectors to conduct their mission in 1997 and 1998, the United States again did not approach Turkey for permission to use Incirlik-based aircraft in attacks on Iraq.¹³⁶ This inability to pursue the full spectrum of military options in northern Iraq has weakened United States policy and its coercive value against Saddam Hussein, while handicapping the effective potential of airpower. In

effect, American policy, and its lack of a clearly defined strategy, has split airpower: the United States controls the air, but chooses not to use its power.

The northern no-fly zone today is a relic of the Gulf War; a reminder of the unity the coalition once had and a visible symbol of the breakdown it has undergone. While created and justified under the pretext of UNSCR 688, the events of September 1996 all too vividly reveal its political inability to prevent or punish humanitarian transgressions by Saddam's forces. The limited objectives that it seeks to accomplish – maintaining the coalition presence in northern Iraq, and excluding the Iraqi Air Force – are fulfilled. Nevertheless, its value as an instrument of containment is greatly diminished by the demonstrated limitations of current American foreign policy.

The Arab States

Operation Southern Watch and the southern no-fly zone in Iraq were established in August 1992. At that time American foreign policy interests in southern Iraq differed substantially from those in northern Iraq in April 1991, when Operation Provide Comfort had been initiated. Unlike the Kurdish situation, in which America's hand had largely been forced by the Turks, French, and Iraqis, the United States led the charge to intervene in southern Iraq. The assistance provided to the Shiites, however, would differ greatly from that afforded the Kurds.

It had never been an American desire to partition Iraq or threaten its territorial integrity, and this policy influenced the decision to withhold aid from the Shiites during their uprising after the Gulf War.¹³⁷ American reluctance to support the Shiites also

stemmed from their close association with Iran, and the perceived danger of a pro-Iranian entity on the border with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.¹³⁸ American foreign policy, which had been staunchly anti-Iranian since the hostage crisis in Tehran, did not favor aid to the Shiite minority in Iraq; their plight, however, would come to serve United States interests, and lead directly to the establishment of the southern no-fly zone.

As opposed to the relatively sudden creation of the northern no-fly zone, a southern no-fly zone was mentioned frequently in the weeks prior to its official pronouncement. In the months leading up to Operation Southern Watch, the Iraqi army had stepped up its attacks on the Shiites, and used its fighters and helicopters extensively in its offensive against the minority faction.¹³⁹ The Bush administration felt increasing pressure to take action, not only because of the near-genocidal actions of Saddam Hussein, but also because the much vaunted success of Operation Desert Storm was now often called into question by Iraq's growing aggression and defiance of the United Nations. In contrast to the overwhelming approval rating President Bush received after Operation Desert Storm, many now accused him of ending the war too quickly, before a more decisive outcome – without Saddam Hussein in power – had been achieved.¹⁴⁰

These circumstances, combined with domestic economic problems, contributed to a dramatic reversal that would have been unthinkable a year earlier: the Democratic candidate for president, Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton, had overtaken President Bush in the polls in early August.¹⁴¹ Many were quick to accuse the President of taking action against Iraq in response to this turn of events, a charge the Bush administration strongly denied.¹⁴² Regardless of the motivation, Saddam's intransigence and repression of the Shiites clearly played into the hands of American policy makers, who found the success

of the northern no-fly zone appealing. The Shiite cause was not an important American interest, but the creation of a surveillance mission in southern Iraq to help the oppressed minority would concurrently serve other, more vital interests – access to the vast energy resources of the Persian Gulf and the security of U.S. Allies.¹⁴³ With the backing of the British and French, and using the same justification as for Operation Provide Comfort – UNSCR 688 – Operation Southern Watch was put into place on August 26th, 1992.

Notwithstanding its implementation under the auspices of UNSCR 688, and unlike Operation Provide Comfort in northern Iraq, Operation Southern Watch did not have a humanitarian component. While ostensibly established to monitor Iraqi repression of the Shiites, administration officials also described the no-fly zone as the first step to increase pressure on Saddam Hussein and enhance the conditions for his overthrow.¹⁴⁴ When asked what the United States would do if Saddam continued to attack the Shiites with ground forces, President Bush was non-committal, adopting a "wait and see" position.¹⁴⁵ Not surprisingly, the United States did not come to the aid of the Shiites when Saddam continued his repressive persecution, and thus avoided the thorny issue of potentially fracturing Iraq by aiding the pro-Iranian rebels. Most importantly, the no-fly zone provided the United States with a means of monitoring Saddam's forces, protecting America's vital interest in the region, and signaling decisive engagement. American policy towards Iraq was visibly toughened with the imposition of this second no-fly zone, and its "foot-in-the-door" would quickly prove advantageous to the President.

In January 1993, following weeks of Iraqi refusals to comply with provisions of the cease-fire resolution, incursions into Kuwait, and violations of the no-fly zone, coalition aircraft operating from Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, attacked command and control

and air defense positions in Iraq. These operations were carried out in conjunction with cruise missile attacks against similar Iraqi facilities. Although faced with criticism from other Arab nations, the Saudi government did not prevent coalition aircraft from attacking Iraq. This, however, would be the last pre-planned attack carried out against Iraq by coalition aircraft based in Saudi Arabia or other Arab states. Two additional cruise missile attacks against Iraq were conducted in 1993 and 1996, but the launch platforms for these weapons consisted of surface and submarine vessels in the Persian Gulf and B-52 aircraft from Guam.

American foreign policy in the Gulf and the United States relationship with the Arab members of the coalition came under pressure in 1992, prior to the January 1993 attack on Iraq. The lack of American insistence that Israel comply with UN security council resolutions concerning the Palestinian problem, and the absence of Western intervention to prevent the persecution and murder of Muslims in Bosnia, was regarded as a blatant double standard by the Arab nations in the Persian Gulf.¹⁴⁶ There was also widespread disfavor with the continuing presence of foreign forces on Arab soil, long after the war with Saddam had ended. The southern no-fly zone, which was purportedly established to provide relief to the Shiites in Iraq, received little support from the Arab states when it was introduced. The motives of the West were seen as neo-colonial, intent on securing strategic and commercial interests in the region and ensuring the creation of regimes supportive of their interests.¹⁴⁷

The Clinton administration's "dual-containment" policy towards Iran and Iraq strongly emphasized the importance of the no-fly zones in reducing the threat posed by Saddam Hussein to his neighbors. Saddam's neighbors, however, did not perceive the

Iraqi threat to be as dangerous as viewed by American policy makers. Criticism of American heavy-handedness was heard throughout the Arab world following the cruise missile attack against Iraq in September 1996.¹⁴⁸ The repercussions of this unilateral response to Saddam's aggression inevitably had a significant impact on American ability to respond to a bellicose Iraq, unwilling to submit to UNSCOM weapons inspections.

The United States containment of Iraq consisted of a fourfold approach: economic sanctions, UNSCOM monitoring and inspections, a no-drive zone south of the thirty-second parallel (imposed by UNSCR 949 in 1994), and the no-fly zones.¹⁴⁹ In the course of several years, the sanctions had greatly affected the Iraqi people, and turned much Arab sentiment against the United States. By 1997 Arab leaders, while privately wishing to see Saddam deposed, did not support any action that would further harm the Iraqi populace. Although tolerant of the no-fly zones, the unwillingness of Arab nations to allow aircraft based within their borders to carry out attacks against Iraqi targets severely degraded the coalition's ability to use force, and clearly weakened the status of American foreign policy.

Iraq's refusal to cooperate with UNSCOM inspections in 1997 was met with a buildup of U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf, as President Clinton prepared for military action against Saddam. However, much as was the case with Turkey in 1996, Arab states balked at the prospect of attacks originating from within their borders. Only Kuwait was willing to allow American aircraft to stage missions from its bases; Saudi Arabia, where the preponderance of American aircraft were located, would only permit support aircraft – tankers, AWACS, and other non-lethal platforms – to participate in any hostilities. Faced with this drawback, the Clinton administration pressed forward with plans to use

forces in Kuwait and aboard U.S. aircraft carriers to attack Iraq. The loss of Saudi Arabian support, however, severely impacted the war fighting potential of American forces in the Gulf. Only the direct, last minute intervention by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan ended the tense stand-off and averted the likely use of force by the United States.

Currently, the Iraqi no-fly zones continue to provide surveillance, restrict the Iraqi Air Force to flying between the thirty-third and thirty-sixth parallels, and stand as the first line of defense in the event Saddam becomes adventurous. But in many ways, they have been relegated to a bystander role in the Persian Gulf. If, as the Clinton administration states, Operation Southern Watch is the key to containment, it only has a peripheral effect on Saddam's actions, and no coercive ability to force compliance with a gamut of UN resolutions. This weakness has been greatly exacerbated by the refusal of Arab states to support combat sorties from their airfields. The aircraft assigned to patrol the north and south no-fly zones have not participated in pre-planned attacks on Iraq in over five years; notwithstanding another invasion of Kuwait or an overt threat to the U.S. or its allies, it is difficult to envision the circumstances under which they would again bomb Iraq.

The larger problem, however, is a U.S. policy towards Iraq that lacks a clear means to an end, and the role to be played by airpower in achieving that goal. Saddam's basis of support does not emanate from control of the air, but from control of the Iraqi people and army. Stated otherwise, *Saddam's ability to fly his aircraft in northern or southern Iraq is not a peacetime center of gravity*, and the elimination thereof will not cause his downfall or force his hand. The no-fly zones have not prevented his oppression of the Shiites, or his ability to move his ground forces into Kurd territory. Operation

Southern Watch did not prevent Saddam from massing troops near Kuwait in 1994; it was a rapid reinforcement of aircraft and troops from the United States that deterred his army. Seven years after Operation Desert Storm, Iraq has yet to meet the provisions of the cease-fire resolution. Until those conditions are met, with or without Saddam Hussein in power, it is unlikely that the no-fly zones will be abolished. Without Arab support of lethal enforcement, it is also unlikely that they will have any significant effect on the outcome of the situation. As Secretary of State Warren Christopher said in 1996, "the only language he (Saddam) understands, (is) the language of force" – the coalition, however, has lost its voice.¹⁵⁰

NATO

The Bosnia no-fly zone played a crucial role in American foreign policy towards post-Cold War Europe, coming at a time when NATO faced an uncertain future in the aftermath of the Soviet Union's demise. In 1992, the tragic unfolding of events in the Balkans was met with American determination to avoid entanglement in what was widely viewed as a European problem. Secretary of State James Baker encapsulated the Bush administration's position by stating that "We do not have a dog in that fight," a blunt assessment of the United States position towards Bosnia.¹⁵¹ Events would soon prove otherwise, however, and reverse the administration's position.

Several factors, both domestic and international, affected President Bush and his advisors as the war in Bosnia escalated and pictures and stories of Serb and Croat atrocities filled the media. European allies, who had forces participating in UNPROFOR,

called for U.S. participation in the mission. Democratic presidential candidate Bill Clinton was openly critical of the President, calling for tougher measures and air strikes against the Serbs.¹⁵² Egypt, Turkey, and other predominantly Muslim states voiced their dissatisfaction with an American policy that castigated Iraq, but did little to support the Bosnian Muslims against Serb aggression.¹⁵³ While there was very little domestic support for sending ground forces to Bosnia, strong pressure was building to “do something.”

That “something” evolved into U.S. support for a widening UNPROFOR mission, including a modest commitment of American troops in Croatia and Sarajevo, and the passage of UNSCR 781, establishing the no-fly zone in Bosnia.¹⁵⁴ The Bosnia no-fly zone differed from the Iraqi no-fly zones in several ways: the Bosnia zone was specifically authorized by UN resolution; it was established to prevent flights by unauthorized aircraft, not protect aircraft assigned to monitor humanitarian conditions; NATO was engaged to monitor the zone; and the Bosnia no-fly zone was initially not enforced. President Bush, in a statement on humanitarian aid to Bosnia following the approval of resolution 781, offered to participate in the enforcement of the no-fly zone “if asked by the United Nations.”¹⁵⁵ The United Nations, however, was not inclined to enforce the no-fly zone, because of the potential threat to UNPROFOR personnel in Bosnia. The British and French were the staunchest opponents of enforcement, since their troops made up the majority of UNPROFOR. Their fears were reinforced by the threats of Radovan Karadzic, President of the breakaway Bosnian Serb Republic, who warned that enforcement would lead to attacks on UN forces.¹⁵⁶ Nevertheless, following continued Serb aggression in late 1992, France and the United Kingdom agreed to

support a UN resolution calling for the enforcement of the no-fly zone. The proposal broke down, however, when the United States insisted on allowing the aircraft to bomb ground positions.

The incoming Clinton administration supported a stronger UN position, and after repeated Serb defiance of the no-fly zone eroded European objections, it successfully pushed for UNSCR 816, authorizing the enforcement of the no-fly zone. Starting on April 12th, 1993, the United States was engaged in the Balkan conflict; more importantly, however, NATO was engaged in its first out-of-area operation – the no-fly zone had given the venerable institution new life.

American foreign policy in Europe has been inexorably tied to NATO since the Treaty of Washington was passed in 1949. Without a doubt, the alliance has proven to be “the world’s strongest and historically best collective politico-military organization.”¹⁵⁷ In the aftermath of the Cold War, however, the viability of NATO had come into question. The Soviet Union was no longer a threat, the Warsaw Pact had dissolved, and the relevance of the organization to the world’s new balance of power was uncertain. The alliance did not participate in the Gulf War, or in Operation Provide Comfort, although several of its member nations did. The reluctance of the European states to commit NATO ground forces to prevent the crisis in Bosnia, a nation on the doorstep of the alliance, was indicative to many of a loss of purpose. During congressional testimony, the assistant secretary of state for European and Canadian affairs was asked, “if NATO couldn’t stop the violence in Yugoslavia, how could they expect it to be a policing agent in any other problem areas?”¹⁵⁸

Once engaged, however, NATO and the United States found themselves severely constrained by the “dual-key” agreement with the United Nations, which compromised NATO’s ability to respond to force with force. Secretary of Defense Perry was unequivocal in his criticism of the arrangement, stating that, “While the dual key arrangement with the UN was created for understandable political reasons, a heavy price has been paid for violating the basic military tenet of unified command and control.”¹⁵⁹ The American administration pushed for wider use of force, but was unable to influence UN Secretary General Boutros-Ghali or his special representative, Ambassador Yasushi Akashi. The dichotomy of the UN role – peacekeeper on the ground, and peace enforcer in the air – significantly weakened its position and ability to influence the situation in Bosnia. NATO was on the verge of unraveling as U.S. and European representatives clashed over plans for robust air action, and by 1994 it was considered almost irrelevant in dealing with the Bosnian conflict.¹⁶⁰

The paralysis caused by the Serb capture of almost 400 UN hostages in June 1995, combined with the shootdown of an American F-16 and increased Serb belligerence and violence, brought about the changes desired by the Clinton administration. The foreign ministers of engaged nations, the North Atlantic Council, and the UN secretary-general took the necessary steps to allow NATO airpower to resolutely protect UN safe areas. Operation Deliberate Force not only ended attacks on Sarajevo and other safe areas, but in a larger sense re-established NATO’s credibility and role as a military alliance. After three years of frustration and lack of progress in the Bosnian conflict, the three weeks of precisely applied airpower during Operation Deliberate Force was decisive in bringing the Bosnian Serbs to the peace table.¹⁶¹

The enforcement of the no-fly zone answered the question of NATO's relevance in the new European security environment, and arguably saved the alliance.¹⁶² NATO Secretary Manfred Wornat was desperate to move the alliance away from its Cold War emphasis on deterrence and defense, and the no-fly zone provided that opportunity.¹⁶³ The out-of-area mission was critical in the eyes of many to NATO's future, who saw the purpose of NATO as fundamentally changed, and a need to expand beyond the traditional role of the alliance.¹⁶⁴ In 1994 the NATO Heads of State declared that "NATO increasingly will be called upon to undertake missions in addition to the traditional and fundamental task of collective defense of its members;" the success of NATO's first military mission gave credence to that declaration, and set the alliance on its path to the next century.¹⁶⁵ American foreign policy, which strongly supported an expanded role for NATO in the post-Cold War era, was aptly served by the newfound vitality of its oldest security structure.

Airpower and Foreign Policy

The development of no-fly zones intersected with American foreign policy at a critical juncture in time. While there has generally been – with good reason – reluctance on the part of American administrations to deploy ground forces, the same level of precaution is not apparent with airpower. Airpower is an attractive and clean alternative to the "muddy boots" of ground forces, in which the potential of a foreign policy debacle is riskier. With airpower, policy makers have the ability to rapidly interject forces into a theater, and more importantly, control the conditions and terms under which action is

taken. Not only are fewer overall personnel involved in an air operation, but also the number actually exposed to contact with the enemy is far lower compared to a land operation. If political objectives or restraints do not require or cannot involve a ground presence, but do necessitate American involvement, airpower is an expedient means to project force and an unambiguous signal of United States engagement.

No-fly zones provide American foreign policy makers more than engagement, however; they also offer an ability to rapidly escalate from a surveillance and patrol mission to more lethal applications of airpower. Among airpower's inherent advantages is the ability to quickly shift gears, without calling in additional units or personnel. An F-16 that flies a surveillance mission in the morning can be tasked to fly a retaliatory interdiction mission that afternoon, using the same aircraft, pilot, maintenance, and support personnel that accompany every Air Expeditionary Force. This flexibility gives the national command authorities a powerful tool; much like a holstered weapon, its presence and potential are visible for all to see – and its proximity makes it rapidly available when necessary. Without conviction, though, the weapon is useless; it may look menacing, and if brandished it might bluff an opponent – but without the will or the means to kill, it has no long-term deterrent effect.

In 1991 and 1992 a limited application of airpower became a valuable tool in American foreign policy, as the administration searched for an appropriate response to Saddam's persecution of the Kurds and Shiites. No-fly zones became the visible, low-risk means of enforcing U.S. policy and denying a measure of sovereignty to Saddam Hussein. In Bosnia, the no-fly zone provided President Clinton with the means to engage the United States, but at a level of risk acceptable to the American public and Congress.

The legacy of Vietnam and the low number of casualties in Operation Desert Storm placed a tremendous burden on U.S. leadership, who were expected to suffer minimal or no losses.¹⁶⁶ The limited nature of the no-fly zone mission, tied to the limited objectives of the operation, lent itself to this overriding concern.

The inherent drawback to *limited* forces and *limited* political objectives are the *limited* possible outcomes. In Iraq, Operations Provide Comfort, Northern Watch, and Southern Watch have virtually eliminated all flights in the no-fly zones, and protected Iraq's neighbors by containing Saddam's expansionist tendencies. But American foreign policy hasn't moved Iraq closer to compliance with the provisions of UNSCR 687, created the hoped-for overthrow of Saddam Hussein and his regime, or prevented the ongoing violations of UNSCR 688 and the persecution of the Shiites in southern Iraq. In Bosnia, Operation Deny Flight was handcuffed by its inability to take forceful action against the Serbs, until a more resolute American and European policy lifted its limitations and Operation Deliberate Force achieved critical, conflict-resolving objectives.

A no-fly zone must be part of a larger, more comprehensive strategy intended to achieve an administration's objectives. These measures, in turn, must synergistically influence the targeted nation or entity to a degree where continued defiance, hostility, or intransigence becomes incompatible with long-term survival. Each measure must, in its own right, be resolutely enforced; weakness in any area will be exploited by the opponent, thus diluting the effectiveness of the overall strategy, and degrading the administration's policy.

Clear political objectives, tied to a desired end state and the means by which to attain them, are the basis for unambiguous military objectives and success. *Policy makers that support a limited use of force in pursuit of limited political objectives must accept the potential for an unlimited commitment.* In such a situation, the greatest enemy is not the adversarial nation or entity, but time; no other factor works more for the opponent, or more effectively against American interests. Long term commitments that are clearly tied to vital national interests, including NATO and Korea, are far less susceptible to the vicissitudes of time, and the capricious nature of politics, public opinion, and coalitions. Political and military objectives in these cases are rarely nebulous, less likely to be swayed by singular events, and encounter little resistance to enforcement. Those commitments that are peripheral to national interests, or whose objectives lack clarity or purpose, are most subject to the erosion of support – domestic and international – by the passage of time. While this limitation should not preclude the use of American forces in circumstances that warrant intervention, it should remain foremost in the minds of political and military leaders that success in a limited operation is mortgaged against the duration of the mission.

Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, who led the Contact Group in Bosnia and brokered the Dayton Peace Agreement, states that “in the end, what matters in foreign policy is results (sic).”¹⁶⁷ The results in Bosnia speak for themselves – from the wartime death rate of 130,000 civilians in 1992, to less than 100 in 1995 and the establishment of a tenuous, yet peaceful resolution that still holds in 1998 – the U.S. policy eventually worked.¹⁶⁸ The Bush and Clinton administrations achieved their goal of ending the crisis without a single combat-related death to American personnel. The no-fly zone was only

one instrument in a comprehensive approach to the Bosnian conflict, but as the only enforcement mechanism of this policy that engaged American forces in combat, it ultimately provided the catalyst for the cessation of hostilities.

In Iraq, results also speak for themselves, and for American policy. The passage of time has eaten away the support of coalition partners, strengthened Saddam's position, and eroded American influence in the region. The lack of a clearly defined strategy to confront Saddam and maintain coalition integrity has made the application of airpower more difficult than ever. Except for Kuwait, Arab members of the coalition no longer support the use of their bases for strikes against Iraq. The same is true in northern Iraq, where the ability of the United States to respond to Iraqi aggression is constrained by the policies of the Turkish government. Among our European partners, France does not participate in Operation Northern Watch, keeps its aircraft below the thirty-second parallel, and has consistently opposed the use of force to compel Iraqi compliance with UNSCR 687. This breakdown in political resolve and coalition unity unavoidably impacted the no-fly zones in Iraq, as demonstrated by the challenges of 1997. The uncontested movement of surface-to-air missile systems into southern and northern Iraq, in violation of the September 1996 démarche by the United States, has allowed Saddam to challenge coalition air superiority in the no-fly zones.¹⁶⁹ The "pilgrim flights" by Iraqi helicopters in April and the numerous September-October violations may well indicate Saddam's future counterstrategy to the no-fly zones. Without the political will or ability to resolutely enforce the northern and southern no-fly zones, they will continue to evolve from an operational policy into a purely declaratory policy, further strengthening Saddam's hand and diminishing American influence in the Persian Gulf.

No-Fly Zones and American Defense Policy

The first no-fly zone was established at a key time in history: the Cold War was in its last throes – eastern bloc nations had elected non-communist governments, Germany was reunited, and the Soviet Union was hurtling towards its demise on the last day of 1991. The United States military, which for years had armed and trained itself for conflict with its bipolar adversary, was facing a brave, new world order.

In 1984 then-Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger established his doctrine for sending American forces into combat abroad. Among his six requirements were clearly defined political and military objectives and the ways to meet them.¹⁷⁰ The debilitating experience of Vietnam, coupled with the 1983 Marine tragedy in Lebanon, convinced Weinberger that nothing less than a vital national interest should call American forces into action. General Colin Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff from 1989 through 1993, was not enamored of a fixed set of rules for determining when to go to war, but he did incorporate the essence of Weinberger's Doctrine into his own criteria governing the use of American military power.¹⁷¹ The "Powell Doctrine" advocated clear political and military objectives, the use of decisive force, a high probability of success, and a rapid withdrawal of forces once the mission had been accomplished.¹⁷²

Operation Desert Storm was a textbook case of the Powell Doctrine in action, as the American and coalition forces trained and grew for six months in preparation for combat. The overwhelming and decisive air campaign contributed to a short ground offensive and a rapid victory over the demoralized Iraqi forces.¹⁷³ Following the cease-fire President Bush prioritized a quick return of American troops and the avoidance of

any long-term presence in the Persian Gulf. The crisis in northern Iraq, however, prevented him from achieving this goal. Ironically, the war that so exemplified the Powell mandate of "get in, get the job done, and get out" gave rise to the longest military commitment since the Vietnam War.

The first no-fly zone in Iraq was initially conceived as a protective umbrella for the humanitarian mission of Operation Provide Comfort. Although not intended to last indefinitely, it evolved into an open-ended mission with the withdrawal of American ground forces and the introduction of UN peacekeepers in June 1991. In President Bush's 16 July letter to Congress, he stipulated that the "coalition plans to maintain an appropriate level of force in the region for as long as required by the situation in Iraq."¹⁷⁴ This was a startling departure from his comments in April, when he hoped that the protection of the Kurds would not require "a long-term effort," and stated that the troops would remain "...as long as it takes to be sure these refugees are taken care of, and not a minute longer."¹⁷⁵

Clausewitz's dictum that "No one starts a war...without first being clear in his mind what he intends to achieve by that war and how he intends to conduct it," all too clearly applies to the Iraqi no-fly zones.¹⁷⁶ The military objective was achieved from the first sortie flown over Iraq – Saddam did not openly challenge the no-fly zones, and on the few occasions when he did, repercussions were swift. However, the no-fly zone lacked a clear political objective, and the means by which to achieve it; predictably, this shortfall contributed to the greater Iraqi dilemma, as Saddam's reluctance to comply with the UN provisions remained unchanged.

Operation Provide Comfort was a departure from the Powell Doctrine, and the General was quick to argue against the use of American military forces in northern Iraq. He urged "declaring victory, getting out and keeping the military's reputation spotless."¹⁷⁷ But President Bush was determined to "do what we can to help there without being bogged down into a ground force action in Iraq."¹⁷⁸ The hesitancy of the President and his advisors to intervene had largely been fueled by their intense desire to avoid a Vietnam-like quagmire in Iraq; the rapid withdrawal of U.S. ground forces from northern Iraq was intended to preclude this scenario.¹⁷⁹ The no-fly zone, however, had an impact that went beyond the immediate relief of the Kurds; the lack of an Iraqi challenge to coalition aircraft, infrequent use of force, and no American casualties gave this non-traditional use of airpower an aura of engagement – and success. Without the potential complications or repercussions of an extended presence by ground forces, the United States maintained its domination of Saddam Hussein by preventing his persecution of the Kurds and denying him the use of his own airspace. Although the military objectives of patrolling the no-fly zone were limited, they were clearly achievable, ascertainable, and expandable. This made it no less anathema to Powell, who viewed limited force with great disdain: "As soon as they tell me it is limited, it means they do not care whether you achieve a result or not."¹⁸⁰

The limited use of airpower was successful in enforcing the northern no-fly zone, however, which made it an attractive policy option in 1992 when diplomatic and political efforts could not enforce the cease-fire provisions of UNSCR 687 or the humanitarian provisions of UNSCR 688 in southern Iraq. The Bush administration wanted to send a strong message to Saddam, but was not willing to deploy ground forces. The southern

no-fly zone, established in August 1992, aptly fulfilled the requirements of an American response: the United States took action, Saddam was contained on two fronts, and the level of force was reasonable and unlikely to result in American casualties. With this latest intervention, however, American defense policy moved further away from the well-known rules of the President's senior military advisor, as U.S. forces became engaged in two limited and open-ended operations with uncertain political objectives and undefined end states.

Operation Southern Watch was indicative of a metamorphosis in American defense policy as the United States moved further away from the Cold War and the Gulf War. As the only remaining superpower, the U.S. found itself answering the call for military action more frequently than ever before, while concurrently downsizing from the large force structure developed in the previous decade. The Powell Doctrine, often criticized as too restrictive, was challenged by the events that unfolded in Europe, Africa, and other regions of the world. The reluctance to engage American forces in situations that eluded a purely political or diplomatic resolution became most evident in Bosnia; it was here that the metamorphosis would become complete.

In 1992 the world was stunned by the events taking place in the former Yugoslavia, as Bosnian Serbs, Croats, and Muslims fought a horrific and genocidal ethnic war. President Bush strongly supported the establishment of a no-fly zone over Bosnia, but was unable to convince U.S. Allies to enforce it. Powell, who did not support American intervention in the Balkans, took extraordinary steps in making his position known outside the inner circle of the White House. Only days before the United Nations debated the creation of a Bosnia no-fly zone, he publicly expressed his objections to the

plan in the New York Times. Citing the lack of clear political objectives, Powell rejected the limited use of airpower in enforcing a no-fly zone or attacking Serb forces in Bosnia.¹⁸¹ Once again, however, the President elected to pursue an interventionist path, and supported the UN Security Council resolution and its imposition of a no-fly zone in Bosnia.

President Clinton overcame French and British objections to no-fly zone enforcement early in his inaugural term, and by April 1993 American aircraft, as part of NATO, were patrolling the skies of Bosnia. The United States was decisively engaged in an operation that demonstrated its will to “do something,” as long as that “something” didn’t involve ground forces or the loss of American lives. Recent involvement in the Somalia mission had raised questions about sending ground troops into hostile situations that didn’t involve U.S. vital interests, or have a clear exit strategy. Like Somalia, Bosnia did not involve vital U.S. interests, but its proximity to Central Europe, Greece, and other vital allies demanded a U.S. response. The rigidity of the Powell Doctrine was challenged by the difficult Balkan situation, and by the new members of the Clinton administration.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher, Secretary of Defense Les Aspin, and UN Ambassador Madeleine Albright favored the use of limited force to further U.S. policy. Aspin criticized the “all-or-nothing” Powell Doctrine, and supported the selective use of force to buttress U.S. diplomacy in Bosnia and elsewhere.¹⁸² Albright was a particularly harsh critic of General Powell, who continued his tenure as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff during the first year of the Clinton administration. During a heated argument with Powell, she pointedly asked him “What’s the point of having this superb military

you're always talking about if we can't use it?"¹⁸³ In direct opposition to Powell's views, Albright strongly supported limited applications of U.S. military power, stating that "Just because you cannot do everything does not mean you should do nothing"¹⁸⁴ Powell defended his position as fervently as those opposed to him assailed it, criticizing the rush to intervene without clear political objectives, as the U.S. did in Lebanon, and insisting on safeguards against incrementally greater involvement, as in Vietnam. Nevertheless, the shift in defense policy under the Clinton administration inexorably progressed towards greater use of limited force for limited purposes.

General John Shalikashvili, who succeeded Powell as Chairman, affirmed the importance of Weinberger's "vital interest" criteria during the Cold War and the relevance of the Powell Doctrine in its immediate aftermath. Reflecting on a changed world, however, Shalikashvili declared that different global circumstances required new rules of military engagement.¹⁸⁵ President Clinton espoused this new approach, stating that "The United States cannot and should not try to solve every problem in the world. But where our interests are clear and our values are at stake, where we can make a difference, we must act and we must lead."¹⁸⁶ The new "Clinton Doctrine" maintained Powell's emphasis on low casualties, avoidance of mission creep, and incremental mission expansion, but adopted a less restrictive approach to intervention, including peacekeeping and humanitarian missions.¹⁸⁷ Predictably, this policy shift resulted in the use of limited force to achieve limited aims, an inherent characteristic of force employment outside of vital national interests.

The no-fly zones were crucial in this evolution of American defense policy and doctrine. Their contribution went beyond preventing flight in the designated zones; they

also achieved other administration goals, intrinsically tied to the presence of American airmen in a hostile environment. The lack of conflict, success in eliminating flights within designated airspace, and absence of casualties provided the Clinton administration the confidence, track record, and congressional and public support to expand the criteria under which all American forces were committed. Had the results been otherwise – had Iraq confronted U.S. aircraft in the no-fly zones, shot them down, and killed or captured American aircrews – the ability of the President to use limited force in future missions would have been compromised, and the evolution of American defense policy may not have followed the same path. In much the same manner, had the F-16 shootdown in Bosnia not been a singular event, and American aircrews been killed or captured in the Balkans, the end game in Bosnia may well have played out differently. NATO might have failed in its first out-of-area mission, further weakening the alliance and bolstering those who viewed it as an irrelevant Cold War anachronism. In short, the success of airpower and no-fly zones in achieving limited objectives made possible a less rigid, interventionist defense policy, more responsive to American political interests in the post-Cold War world.

No-Fly Zones – 1998 and Beyond

Since their inception no-fly zones have served a dual purpose: they denied airspace to adversarial entities, and they contributed to a significant shift in American defense policy and the use of limited force. Their future utility in Bosnia, Iraq, and elsewhere will be influenced by many political and pragmatic factors, whose impact will have both near- and long-term consequences.

No-Fly Zones in the Near-Term

In the near-term, the Bosnia no-fly zone will remain static; with NATO concurrence, Serb training flights in the formerly restricted area have resumed. As stability returns to the region, a moderate amount of airpower will be required to ensure compliance with the Dayton accords. Conversely, the Iraqi no-fly zones will continue to be affected by the evolving situation in the Persian Gulf. In early 1998 Saddam's unwillingness to comply with UNSCR 687 and submit to UNSCOM inspections was countered by a buildup of American forces in the Persian Gulf, as the United States prepared to back up diplomacy with military power. Among several punitive measures considered by the Clinton Administration during this crisis was expanding the no-fly zones over the entire nation of Iraq.

A nationwide no-fly zone would expand U.S. strategic influence over Iraq, but it is unlikely that this added pressure alone would, after seven years, convince Saddam to comply with the provisions of UNSCR 687. Arguably, a countrywide no fly zone could

prove detrimental to U.S. interests in the Persian Gulf; it would incrementally deepen American military involvement in the Iraqi morass, without gaining a significant military or political advantage. In their present configuration, the no-fly zones benefit the United States by maintaining a forward presence in an area of vital interest to the nation; containing Saddam, and decreasing the threat he poses to his neighbors and our Allies; and protecting UNSCOM flights by American U-2 aircraft. An increase in the coverage of the no-fly zone without corresponding, clear political objectives, a more robust presence, and a determined American enforcement policy will not significantly add to these advantages, and may well result in the opposite effect – a reduction in our current capability.

Operationally, a countrywide no-fly zone faces many challenges, but none so great as enforcement. The vague political objective to punish Saddam and increase the containment pressure on Iraq is difficult to translate into military objectives, and more difficult still to execute with limited resources. In the present no-fly zones, the U.S., United Kingdom, and France fly a limited number of patrols over Iraq; these patrols are not flown around the clock, and in northern Iraq, not even every day. Consequently, there are numerous opportunities for Iraqi aircraft to violate the no-fly zone when coalition aircraft are not present, as the events in October 1997 demonstrated. A nationwide flight ban would increase the no-fly zone area by one third, and require a significant enlargement of coalition air forces to ensure adequate surveillance. This expansion of forces would find little host nation support in Saudi Arabia or Turkey; France, which already limits its aircraft to south of the thirty-second parallel, would certainly not support a larger force or no-fly zone. Without an increase in assigned

aircraft and personnel, coalition forces would find it difficult to prevent a determined Iraqi campaign of no-fly zone violations, and its resultant emasculation of American policy. The United States would soon find its operational enforcement policy at risk of becoming a declaratory policy, further weakening American influence in the region.

Enforcement of a nationwide no-fly zone could be handled asymmetrically – such as bombing an Iraqi airbase after its aircraft violated the restrictions – but would likely face Arab opposition; the political risk would clearly outweigh the retaliatory benefit of destroying a runway or a few Iraqi aircraft.¹⁸⁸ Geographical and chronological coverage of the no-fly zone could be expanded by increasing the number of missions flown, while reducing the number of aircraft per mission; this option, however, would also increase risks to the aircrews. In the absence of stealth, offensive and defensive capability is synergistically enhanced by the number of aircraft assigned to each mission; fewer aircraft equates to decreased radar, visual, and electronic awareness of potential threats, and the ability to react to them. Concurrently, Iraq's ability to threaten coalition aircraft, particularly over the more populated sections of the country, would be enhanced by a larger no-fly zone. Mobile surface-to-air systems could easily and surreptitiously be placed in urban areas, and as in Bosnia, shoot down an unsuspecting pilot, well beyond the reach of search and rescue forces. Lastly, Iraq could respond to a nationwide no-fly zone by pursuing a policy of overt violations by civilian aircraft, as it did in April 1997, when pilgrims bound for Mecca flew aboard an airliner to Saudi Arabia.¹⁸⁹ Coalition enforcement of the no-fly zone would be extremely difficult if faced with this scenario.

There is little military benefit to be gained from a countrywide no-fly zone over Iraq. Expanded coalition overflight would provide added surveillance, but satellites

already provide accurate updates of Iraqi troop movements, air defense positions, and other intelligence information. The Iraqi Air Force, already constrained to the central third of their nation, is poorly trained and suffers from a lack of parts, equipment, and trained technical support.¹⁹⁰ In addition, Saddam has limited the resources provided to the Air Force following coup attempts by its officers.¹⁹¹ Clearly, with or without a nationwide no-fly zone, coalition aircraft would dominate the Iraqi Air Force in any foreseeable conflict.

Politically, a nationwide no-fly zone would unquestionably be opposed by three permanent members of the UN Security Council – France, Russia, and China – negating the possibility of a UN resolution in support of the U.S. initiative. Opposition to the larger no-fly zone would also certainly come from the Arab states, jeopardizing the concept from inception. Unlike previous unilateral use of force against Iraq by the U.S., unilateral enforcement of an expanded no-fly zone will not be an option. The events of January and February 1998, in which only UN Secretary General Kofi Annan's personal intervention averted an attack by the United States on Iraq, are clearly indicative of the stressed American policy in this region. The lack of public support from Arab quarters for the use of force, as well as strong French, Russian, and Chinese opposition, severely handicapped the Clinton administration's ability to address the crisis with military means. Inevitably, this lack of support will also extend to the no-fly zones; the oft-criticized lack of clear UN authorization for the no-fly zones will make it difficult for the U.S. to continue their enforcement, and easier for other nations to call for their abolition.

In the interim, a wiser course of action for the United States would be to follow the recommendations of former USAF Chief of Staff Ron Fogleman, who advocates a

three-step approach to the Iraqi no-fly zone. First, make clear to all involved parties that the legitimacy of U.S. forces exists as long as Iraq is not in compliance with UN Security Council resolutions, and that they will only be withdrawn when Iraq complies. Second, after withdrawal, maintain periodic visits by Air Expeditionary Forces and Carrier Battle Groups to ensure continued compliance with UN Security Council resolutions and conduct surveillance, reconnaissance, and intelligence missions; state clearly that the U.S. will not remain indefinitely, and train Arab states to take over the mission. Third, allow Arab states to take over the intelligence and surveillance missions.¹⁹²

Irrespective of the path chosen by U.S. policy makers, the near-term for the Iraqi no-fly zones will be fraught with challenge as long as Saddam remains in power. Recent Iraqi movements of surface-to-air missiles into the no-fly zones, and U.S. unwillingness to challenge their presence, has eroded American air superiority and unfettered transit through the area. Without the political will or ability to punish these violations and to assure complete air superiority, the no-fly zones have already taken a transitional step towards declaratory policy. While this may serve to achieve certain political objectives, it is also a misapplication of airpower, and obviates its advantages while placing aircrews and aircraft at risk. Control of the air is no less crucial to the success of a limited operation than it is to a major theater war; in Iraq, it must remain the cornerstone of the no-fly zones.

No-Fly Zones – Long Term Outlook

There is a large consensus among academics, politicians, and military officers that future use of force by the U.S. and its Western allies will involve more participation in

operations other than war, and less traditional force-on-force applications of combat power. With the exception of the Gulf War, military operations since the end of the Cold War have typically involved peacekeeping, peace enforcement, humanitarian missions, and non-combatant evacuations. The success of no-fly zones in minimizing U.S. casualties, signaling U.S. involvement, and executing U.S. policy will make them an attractive option in future scenarios – but not necessarily an easy one.

The inherent danger, and thus the inherent tension, in choosing to enforce a no-fly zone lies in the unpredictable outcome of this policy. A political situation which calls for a limited use of force is by nature one in which the President and his advisors face a no-choice dilemma: they must take action, but they cannot resort to overwhelming power to achieve their objectives. Yet if the sanctioned nation reacts aggressively and forcefully to the presence of foreign aircraft in their airspace – no matter how limited – a no-fly zone may rapidly escalate to full-scale hostilities – the antithesis of a policy of limited force, low risk, and minimal casualties. Policy makers, therefore, face an unenviable dichotomy – they must “do something” short of war, yet, for reasons they cannot control, a limited use of force may lead to war. This potential slide into conflict must be carefully and thoroughly considered when opting for action, and when selecting a no-fly zone over other possible demonstrations or implements of national power and will – such as economic or diplomatic sanctions and censures.

In the long-term, no-fly zones will be influenced by more than political ramifications; pragmatic and technological considerations will play an equally important role. As in Iraq and Bosnia, future no-fly zones will probably not be unilaterally enforced by a single nation, but by a group of nations acting through the United Nations

or other organizations. In Iraq, the no-fly zones were imposed by a *démarche* from the United States, and supported by the Allied coalition; in Bosnia, a UN Security Council resolution established the no-fly zone, and NATO supported it. The consensus of governments and organizations legitimized the no-fly zones, facilitated their implementation, and enabled their enforcement. This common undertaking, however, was dependent upon the lack of an adversarial world power, opposed to U.S. or European intervention. The rise of a hegemonic power, or the return to a bipolar world, will have a significant impact on the ability of the UN, NATO, or other organizations to impose or enforce similar restrictions on adversarial nation-states.

Even with international will to take action, however, the imposition of a no-fly zone will face difficulties. No-fly zones, while effective in Iraq and Bosnia, have limited applicability against nations that do not have an Air Force, or are so powerful or large that a no-fly zone could not be enforced.¹⁹³ Distance from friendly territory is also critical to the effective support of a no-fly zone. Although the United States Air Force is capable of global engagement, support from neighboring states is often still important to the benign and lethal use of airpower, as the contrast between operations in Bosnia and Iraq revealed. As circumstances surrounding a no-fly zone change, so may the level of support from host nations, impacting U.S. policy or the ability to enforce it. Pre-emptive coordination with host nations, outlining those conditions under which force would be contemplated or employed, would allow greater flexibility when diplomacy fails.

As with today's policy makers, the low risk nature of no-fly zones will make them an attractive option to future policy makers. Low risk, however, is not risk free -- as three separate incidents illustrate: the shootdown of an F-16 over Bosnia in June 1995; the

fratricide of two Army helicopters by U.S. fighters in April 1994, resulting in 26 deaths; and the terrorist bombing of Khobar Towers in April 1996, in which 19 U.S. airmen were killed. In all, more U.S. servicemen and women died in these last two incidents than all combined post-Gulf War operations involving ground forces, including the ill-fated Somalia mission. In the future, the risk of asymmetrical retaliation against deployed U.S. forces will increase, as weapons of mass destruction become more readily available to all nations. The production of biological weapons by Iraq and other nations unfriendly to the United States is well documented; even if not used by these countries, they could be a source for future adversaries.¹⁹⁴ Chemical and nuclear weapons also have the potential to fall into the hands of nations against which America and its allies may use military force.¹⁹⁵

Future no-fly zones will have to contend with the proliferation of helicopters among many of the world's air forces, and their ability to escape detection and destruction in a no-fly zone.¹⁹⁶ Carl Builder, a senior RAND staff member and expert on future military trends and their implications, is a strong advocate of developing new doctrine and capabilities against helicopters and other slow-moving aircraft.¹⁹⁷ The success of helicopters in violating the Bosnia no-fly zone is illustrative of this need. During Operation Deny Flight, helicopters profited from the inability of NATO AWACS to see the low and slow aircraft hiding behind mountainous terrain; the difficulty in intercepting and shooting down a helicopter, particularly in bad weather; and the rules of engagement, which did not permit attacking helicopters that had landed. Although the helicopters only had a minor impact on the conflict in Bosnia, this was not the case in Iraq, where helicopters were a terrible scourge against the Shiites and Kurds. In contrast

to Bosnia, however, the flat terrain of southern Iraq would have afforded little protection to Iraqi helicopters – had the national command authorities permitted U.S. aircraft to attack them.

The evolution of the U.S. Air Force into an Aerospace Force will, in the coming years, have a dramatic impact on “Aerospacepower” and its ability to enforce national policies. Technological leaps will enable no-fly zones to be enforced from space, as satellites develop improved capabilities for detecting aircraft and their takeoff and landing locations. The evolution of airborne laser platforms will make no-fly zone enforcement possible from miles away; when tied into space based infrared systems, unmanned aerial vehicles, and other detection systems, adversary aircraft will not be able to hide or escape. The reliance on host nations for support of combat operations will be diminished as U.S.-based weapons systems, including the B-1 and B-2 bomber, will provide worldwide precision targeting capability. At the tactical level, the F-22 will allow American fighter pilots to dominate any adversaries they may encounter in combat, ensure air superiority for joint U.S. forces, and provide the operational advantage that stealth, precision, and speed bring to an aerial campaign.

In the long-term, the political considerations of a no-fly zone will not change dramatically; future policy makers must ensure that the imposition of a no-fly zone clearly serves American interests, and that the political objective is unambiguous and attainable through the use of limited force. Military leaders must translate these political objectives into sound military objectives and strategy, and ensure the strategy is properly executed at the operational and tactical levels of the mission. Developments in air and space power will change – greatly – and offer new means of projecting national power

and enforcing American policy. Policy makers and military leaders will do well to heed the words of General Billy Mitchell, as true now as when written in his 1925 book, Winged Defense: "In the development of air power, one has to look ahead and not backward and figure out what is going to happen, not too much what has happened." ¹⁹⁸

Conclusion

The concept of a no-fly zone, indeed, the very term itself, was untried and unknown until Saddam Hussein's persecution of the Kurds in northern Iraq demanded a response from the nations that launched the Gulf War. At the time, a few American policy makers wanted a strong response, and some, notably General Colin Powell, wanted no response at all. The no-fly zone, a low-risk middle ground between doing nothing and full-scale engagement, became the long-term answer to Saddam's aggression -- both in the north, and, a year later, in the south. When the atrocities in the Balkans called out for action in 1992, the no-fly zone was again America's answer.

While conducting research for this paper, the most common response by senior military officers, past Department of Defense assistant secretaries, State Department officials, and academics to questions regarding the imposition of the no-fly zones was "What else could the United States do? No-fly zones aren't perfect, but what are the options?" As Dr. Ashton Carter, former Assistant Secretary of Defense for National Security Policy stated, "Who else can do it? The United States is very good at using airpower, and the use of ground troops isn't the American way."¹⁹⁹ General Ron Fogleman put the issue into operational focus, stating that to prevent the use of fighters and helicopters by Iraq, the United States "could put people on the ground at every Iraqi airfield, or use airpower."²⁰⁰ The best means of preventing flights by Iraqi, Bosnian Serb, or Croat forces was to intervene militarily with American airpower.

In Iraq, justifying intervention on the basis of humanitarian concerns -- UNSCR 688 -- allowed the establishment of no-fly zones to protect coalition aircraft, *de facto*

ending the Iraqi use of airpower against the Kurds and Shiites. In that regard, the no-fly zones have been successful; notwithstanding intermittent violations throughout the enforcement period, no coalition aircraft have been shot down, and Saddam has not attacked the Kurds or Shiites by air since 1992. What has not been successful in Iraq is the protection of the Shiites, who are persecuted still by Saddam's ground forces. Unfortunately for the Shiites, protection is not the intent and continued persecution is not the fault of the no-fly zone, but of American and coalition policies and their refusal to do anything more than observe the violations.

In the years since the establishment of the Iraqi no-fly zones, they have become more than a means of monitoring compliance with UNSCR 688. In the Clinton administration, the no-fly zones are the "linchpin" of containment, a means to keep Saddam in a "strategic box," and one method to pressure him into compliance with UN resolutions. Saddam's continued and more powerful rule over Iraq, his uncontested occupation of Irbil in 1996, the ever bolder Iraqi defiance of the United Nations, the state of the fractured coalition, and the inability and unwillingness of the United States to use more than limited force against Iraq, all point to the inescapable failure of the current administration's containment policy – not the no-fly zones. As every day passes, Saddam grows stronger and closer to the lifting of sanctions, the end of inspections, and the eventual dissolution of the no-fly zones – without the benefit of flying his Air Force north of the thirty-sixth parallel, or south of the thirty-third.

In Bosnia, the imposition of a no-fly zone by UN Security Council resolution avoided the issues of legality raised in Iraq. The abdication of command and control to the UN and the "dual-key" concept, however, imposed a drastic penalty on the airpower

maxim of centralized control and decentralized execution. Nevertheless, NATO airpower virtually eliminated fixed-wing flight in the no-fly zone, achieving the intended objective of ending the air war in Bosnia. The numerous helicopter transgressions throughout the period of enforcement did not appreciably effect the tide of the war, nor did they contribute to the "ethnic cleansing" by the Serb forces. Most importantly, the no-fly zone and U.S. resolve permitted an expansion of the NATO mission to include air strikes, which were a decisive factor in bringing the Bosnian Serbs to the peace table in Dayton.

In the larger context of American defense policy, the no-fly zones bolstered the U.S. move away from the Powell Doctrine and towards a more interventionist use of limited force in pursuit of limited political objectives. No-fly zones successfully minimized the loss of American lives in operations other than war; however, the new, limited nature of the missions maximized the commitment time frame. Following six weeks of war in Iraq, the United States has spent seven years enforcing no-fly zones. In Bosnia, the no-fly zone continues to be enforced five years after inception, under the auspices of NATO's Stabilization Force. The extended mission duration in both theaters is not due to the nature of the operation, but a direct result of the change in American defense policy under the Bush and Clinton administrations.

The no-fly zones have been more than just a lot of noise – they have been an important new tool of American policy in the post-Cold War era. As demonstrated in Iraq and Bosnia, no-fly zones alone cannot resolve foreign policy challenges – their implementation must be tied to an overarching strategy designed to bring about desired foreign policy objectives. Though not the solution to the problems of Iraq or Bosnia, no-fly zones have unquestionably been an important part of the solution. The no-fly zones

quickly achieved their primary missions: elimination of the threat to coalition aircraft in Iraq, and ending the air war in Bosnia. The no-fly zones also fulfilled the important task of signaling U.S. commitment to both regions, and avoided mission-endangering U.S. casualties. The inherent restrictions of a limited use of force in support of limited political and military objectives greatly impacted the ability and will of the United States to conduct air strikes and protect ethnic minorities, and reflects a failure of past and current American policy makers to take the necessary steps to execute these missions. Future policy makers will hopefully recognize the lessons of Operations Provide Comfort, Southern Watch, Deny Flight, and Northern Watch, when they capitalize on the strengths that the proper integration of airpower and strategy bring to solving our national security challenges.

NOTES

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⁶ Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov denounced the September 1996 use of force by the U.S. as "absolutely impermissible," and was equally opposed to potential U.S. military action in the Persian Gulf during late 1997 and early 1998. John Lancaster and Bradley Graham, "Iraq and U.S. Move to Slacken Tension," *The Washington Post*, September 14, 1996, p. A1.

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¹⁰ Hehir, lecture notes.

¹¹ McKelvey provides the following description of an air occupation: "The use of air and space power in the intrusive control of specified territory, or territorial activities, of an adversarial nation or group for a specified period of time." The U.S. Air Force, which provides the largest number of aircraft in support of no-fly zones in Iraq and Bosnia, chooses not to use either "occupation" or "intervention" to describe this mission, but instead refers to "exclusion zones" in Air Force Doctrine Document 2-3, Military Operations Other Than War. Available: <http://www.hqafdc.maxwell.af.mil/doctrine/info/2-3.htm>.

¹² Security Council Resolution 686, United Nations Document S/RES/686 (1991) [hereinafter UNSCR 686]. Available: gopher://gopher.undp.org/11/undocs/scd/scouncil.

¹³ American casualties during Operation Desert Storm were 146 killed-in-action and 467 wounded. Michael R. Gordon and General Bernard E. Trainor, *The General's War* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1995), p. 457.

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- ⁸⁹ Francis Curta, "UNPROFOR to Increase Airspace Monitoring," *Paris Agence France Presse*, February 20, 1995: AU2002133195. Foreign Broadcast Information Service Translated Excerpt. Available: *World News Connection* (Online Service).
- ⁹⁰ Julia Preston, "Violations Soaring in 'No-fly Zone'; Aircraft Sighted Daily Over Bosnia," *The Washington Post*, January 15, 1994, p. A16.
- ⁹¹ John Pomfret, "Serbs Close in on Sarajevo Redoubt," *The Washington Post*, 5 Aug 93, p. A20
- ⁹² Admiral Boorda, Commander of NATO forces in southern Europe, did not believe helicopters posed a significant military threat, and were not worth the risk or effort to shoot down. Rick Atkinson, "Fratricide Problem Defies Decades of Efforts," *The Washington Post*, April 15, 1994, p. A19.
- ⁹³ This was the first military engagement in the 45-year history of NATO.
- ⁹⁴ David Owen, *Balkan Odyssey* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1995), p. 354, and William J. Clinton, "America Must Choose Peace," *Defense Issues*, Vol. 10, No. 101. Available: <http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/di95/di10101.html>.
- ⁹⁵ General Ron Fogleman, U.S. Air Force Chief of Staff, 1994-1997, telephonic interview by author, February 16, 1998.
- ⁹⁶ NATO Basic Fact Sheet No. 4.
- ⁹⁷ Robert C. Owen.
- ⁹⁸ General John Shalikashvili, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, "Defense Department Briefing," April 5, 1994. Text from: *Federal Information Systems Corporation Federal News Service*. Available: *Congressional Compass* (Online Service), Bethesda, Maryland: Congressional Information Service.
- ⁹⁹ During the 32 months of Operation Deny Flight only four CAS missions were flown.
- ¹⁰⁰ The adversarial relationship of UNPROFOR and NATO was epitomized by UNPROFOR Commander General Bertrand de Lapresle, who listed three threats to his mission: "Bosnian Serb forces...Bosnian Muslim forces...and NATO - in particular the Americans." See Bertrand de Lapresle, "La Situation Dans l'ex-Yougoslavie," *Le Monde*, October 25, 1994. Available: *Lexis-Nexis* (Online Service). Bethesda, Maryland: Congressional Information Service.
- ¹⁰¹ Robert C. Owen.
- ¹⁰² UN reluctance to authorize air strikes and thereby endanger UNPROFOR personnel was characterized by UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's statement that "Air power is there to protect the peacekeeping forces on the ground, not punish them." *Nouvelles Atlantiques*, Vol. 28, No. 2666, October 28, 1994, p. 1, quoted in Stefano Bianchini and Paul Shoup, *The Yugoslav War, Europe, and the Balkans: How to Achieve Security?* (Ravenna, Italy: Longo Editore, 1995), p. 136.
- ¹⁰³ William Drozdiak and Bradley Graham, "European Force Set for Bosnia," *The Washington Post*, June 4, 1995, p. A1.
- ¹⁰⁴ Robert C. Owen.
- ¹⁰⁵ Commander Stabilisation Force Instructions to the Parties (January 15, 1997), Chapter 9, Paragraph 3: Airspace Control Concept. On file with author.
- ¹⁰⁶ Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), p. 606.
- ¹⁰⁷ Bush, "Question-and-Answer Session with Reporters in Hobe Sound, Florida."
- ¹⁰⁸ George H. W. Bush, "Remarks at a Meeting with Hispanic Business Leaders and an Exchange with Reporters in Newport Beach, California," April 5, 1991, *The George Bush Presidential Library*. Available: <http://www.csdl.tamu.edu/bushlib/papers/1991/91040501.html>.
- ¹⁰⁹ For an in-depth examination of No-Fly Zone Rules of Engagement, see Schmitt, *The Law of Military Operations*, pp. 246-275, and Thomas L. Tinsely, *Balancing ROE with Mission Effectiveness*, June 1998, unpublished manuscript on file at the Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island.

- ¹¹⁰ Bush, "Remarks on Assistance for Iraqi Refugees and a News Conference."
- ¹¹¹ Bush, "Remarks on Hurricane Andrew and the Situation in Iraq and an Exchange with Reporters."
- ¹¹² Pelletiere.
- ¹¹³ Simon V. Mayall, *Turkey: Thwarted Ambition*, McNair Paper 56 (Washington D.C.: Institute for National Strategic Studies, 1997), p. 83.
- ¹¹⁴ Kemal Kirisci, "Post Cold-War Turkish Security and the Middle East," *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, No. 2 (July 1997), Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies. Available: <http://www.biu.ac.il/SOC/besa/meria/6kirisci.html>.
- ¹¹⁵ Pelletiere.
- ¹¹⁶ "Operation Provide Comfort to be Restructured," Turkish Daily News, November 7, 1995. Foreign Broadcast Information Service. Available: *World News Connection* (Online Service). Turkey insisted that aircraft participating in Operation Provide Comfort only carry air-to-air missiles for self-defense, and not carry air-to-ground munitions (bombs). See "Chief of Staff Reportedly Concerned about 'Poised Hammer'," Turkish Daily News, September 9, 1996. Foreign Broadcast Information Service. Available: *World News Connection* (Online Service).
- ¹¹⁷ Kirisci. Half of Iraq's oil flowed through Turkey on its way to market prior to Operation Desert Storm; by 1994 Turkey had lost \$30 billion in commerce with Iraq; trade with other Middle East nations was down from 23% of total in 1989 to 16% in 1994, and over 40,000 truck drivers were unemployed.
- ¹¹⁸ Ibid.
- ¹¹⁹ Dr. Judith S. Yaphe, Visiting Senior Fellow, Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, interview by author, February 24, 1998, Fort McNair, Washington, D.C.
- ¹²⁰ General Cevik Bir, Deputy Chief of Turkish General Staff, address to the National Defense University, November 24, 1997. On file with author.
- ¹²¹ "Iraq and Operation Provide Comfort," Statement by the Press Secretary, July 26, 1996, *White House Press Release Database*. Available: <http://library.whitehouse.gov/Search/Query-PressReleases.html>.
- ¹²² Mayall, p. 85.
- ¹²³ Vago Muradian, "Is U.S. Intelligence Being Mis-Used?," *Air Force Times*, December 12, 1994, p. 20.
- ¹²⁴ Fogleman, 1998, and author's personal experience.
- ¹²⁵ Sylvie Kaufmann, "Analyse les Pas de Clerc de la Politique Americaine," *Le Monde*, September 18, 1996. Available: *Lexis-Nexis* (Online Service). Bethesda, Maryland: Congressional Information Service.
- ¹²⁶ William Perry, *McNeil/Lehrer Newshour*, September 17, 1996. Available: <http://www.pbs.org/Newshour/search.html>, and Warren P. Strobel, "U.S. Continues Buildup with Tepid Support," *The Washington Times*, September 17, 1996, p. A1.
- ¹²⁷ Alan Makovsky, "Toward a More realistic Northern Iraq Policy," *Policywatch* No. 224, October 24, 1996, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy. Available: <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/watch/policywatch1996/224.htm>.
- ¹²⁸ William Perry, *McNeil/Lehrer Newshour*, September 3, 1996. Available: <http://www.pbs.org/Newshour/search.html>.
- ¹²⁹ William Perry, "Special Defense Department Briefing on U.S. Military Action Against Iraq," September 3, 1996. Text from: *Federal Information Systems Corporation Federal News Service*. Available from: *Congressional Compass* (Online Service), Bethesda, Maryland: Congressional Information Service.
- ¹³⁰ Following the attacks on Iraq, an ABC News poll indicated almost 80% of Americans approved of President Clinton's action; a majority of Americans also expressed greater confidence in the ability of President Clinton to deal with Iraq than his opponent, Senator Bob Dole. Zechini Laurent, "Bill Clinton se Felicite du Succes de ses Frappes," *Le Monde*, September 6, 1996. Available: *Lexis-Nexis* (Online Service). Bethesda, Maryland: Congressional Information Service.
- ¹³¹ Richard Perle. Quote from: U.S. Congress. Hearing of the House National Security Committee, "U.S. Policy On Iraq," September 26, 1996. Text from: *Federal Information Systems Corporation Federal News Service*. Available: *Congressional Compass* (Online Service). Bethesda, Maryland: Congressional Information Service.
- ¹³² John Deutch. Quoted in opening statement of Rep. Floyd Spence (S.C.): U.S. Congress. Hearing of the House National Security Committee, "U.S. Policy On Iraq," September 26, 1996. Text from: *Federal Information Systems Corporation Federal News Service*. Available: *Congressional Compass* (Online Service). Bethesda, Maryland: Congressional Information Service. Many others also believed Iraq had gained in the confrontation, including Senators Sam Nunn and John McCain.

- ¹³³ Mike McCurry, "Press Briefing by Mike McCurry and Joe Lockhart," September 1, 1996, *White House Press Release Database*. Available: <http://library.whitehouse.gov/Search/Query-PressReleases.html>.
- ¹³⁴ Perry, Newshour, September 3, 1996.
- ¹³⁵ Perry, Newshour, September 17, 1996.
- ¹³⁶ James Rubin, U.S. Department of State Daily Press Briefing, November 6, 1997. *Department of State Electronic Research Collection*. Available: <http://secretary.state.gov/www/briefings/9711/971106db.html>.
- ¹³⁷ President Bush opposed interference in Iraq's internal affairs on numerous occasions following the Gulf War. See transcripts of 1991 Presidential news conferences on April 3, April 4, April 5, April 7, and April 16, *The George Bush Presidential Library*. Available: <http://www.csd1.tamu.edu/bushlib/papers/1991/toc9104.html>. See also Colin L. Powell, *My American Journey* (New York: Random House, 1995), p. 527.
- ¹³⁸ Nakash, pp. 274-277, and Powell, p. 531. See also Judith Miller, "Show of Force on Iraq Signals New Direction," *The New York Times*, August 30, 1992, section 4, p. 5.
- ¹³⁹ Bush, "Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on Iraq's Compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolutions," September 16, 1992.
- ¹⁴⁰ Cathleen Decker, "Clinton Takes Aim at Bush's Iraq Strategy," *Los Angeles Times*, July 29, 1992, p. A1, and Carl T. Rowan, "Bush Woes Fuel Rumors in D.C.," *Chicago Sun-Times*, July 24, 1992, p. 33.
- ¹⁴¹ Leslie H. Gelb, "Bush Gets Tough on Iraq," *The New York Times*, August 23, 1992, Section 4, p. 15.
- ¹⁴² Bush, "Remarks on Hurricane Andrew and the Situation in Iraq and an Exchange with Reporters."
- ¹⁴³ George H.W. Bush, "The President's News Conference," November 30, 1990, *The George Bush Presidential Library*. Available <http://www.csd1.tamu.edu/bushlib/papers/1990/toc9011.html>, and Perry, Newshour, September 3, 1996.
- ¹⁴⁴ John Lancaster, "U.S. Moves to Toughen Iraq Stance," *The Washington Post*, August 29, 1992, p. A1.
- ¹⁴⁵ Bush, "Remarks on Hurricane Andrew and the Situation in Iraq and an Exchange with Reporters."
- ¹⁴⁶ Gerald Butts, *The Arabs: Myth and Reality* (London: I.B. Tauris & Co., 1994), pp. 2-3, and Jackson Diehl, "Contrast in U.S. Policies is Straining Alliances; 'Double Standard' Seen in Bosnia, Iraq," *The Washington Post*, September 29, 1992, p. A17.
- ¹⁴⁷ Butts, p. 2.
- ¹⁴⁸ Fahd al-Fanik, "U.S. Arrogance of Power," *Amman AL-RA'Y*, Jordan, September 15, 1996, and Ahmad al-Qasir, "Egypt's Ongoing Efforts to Protect Arab National Security," *Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network*, September 7, 1996. Foreign Broadcast Information Service Translated Excerpt. Available: *World News Connection* (Online Service). See also John Lancaster and John Mintz, "Kuwait Delays Accepting More U.S. Troops," *The Washington Post*, September 16, 1996, p. A1.
- ¹⁴⁹ Madeleine Albright, "Crisis in Iraq," February 22, 1998, *Department of State Electronic Research Collection*. Available: <http://www.state.gov/www/regions/nea/usquotes.html>, and Pelletreau.
- ¹⁵⁰ Thomas W. Lippman, "Iraqi Defiance Expected to Continue; U.S. Running Out of Means to Restrain Saddam," *The Washington Post*, September 22, 1996, p. A27.
- ¹⁵¹ James A. Baker III, quoted in Michael Dobbs, "Bosnia Crystallizes U.S. Post-Cold War Role," *The Washington Post*, December 3, 1995, p. A1.
- ¹⁵² "Partial Text of Clinton Yugoslavia Plan," *Los Angeles Times*, July 28, 1992, p. A14.
- ¹⁵³ Woodward, p. 296.
- ¹⁵⁴ George H. W. Bush, "Statement on Humanitarian Assistance to Bosnia," October 2, 1992, *The George Bush Presidential Library*. Available: <http://www.csd1.tamu.edu/bushlib/papers/1992/92100203.html>. Three hundred and fifty American troops were assigned to a field hospital in Zagreb, Croatia, and 15 personnel were assigned to a communications team in Sarajevo. In July 1993 approximately 500 additional Army personnel were assigned to peacekeeping duties in Macedonia.
- ¹⁵⁵ Bush, "Statement on Humanitarian Aid to Bosnia."
- ¹⁵⁶ "The U.S. and the Serbs," *The Washington Post*, December 18, 1992, p. A30.
- ¹⁵⁷ Gen. John R. Galvin. Quote from: U.S. Congress. Hearing of the Senate Armed Services Committee, "Situation in Bosnia," June 14, 1995. Text from: *Federal Information Systems Corporation Federal News Service*. Available: *Congressional Compass* (Online Service). Bethesda, Maryland: Congressional Information Service.
- ¹⁵⁸ Rep. Gilman (N.Y.) in his questions to Stephen Oxman, Assistant Secretary of State for European and Canadian Affairs. Quote from: U.S. Congress. Hearing of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, "Current Events in Europe Focussing on the Situation in the Balkans," September 15, 1993. Text from: *Federal*

Information Systems Corporation Federal News Service. Available: *Congressional Compass* (Online Service). Bethesda, Maryland: Congressional Information Service.

¹⁵⁹ William Perry, "The Enduring, Dynamic Relationship that is NATO," *Defense Issues*, Vol. 10, No. 9, February 5, 1995. Available: <http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/di95/di1009.html>.

¹⁶⁰ William Perry, "Six Postulates for a Future NATO," *Defense Issues*, Vol. 11, No. 56, June 27, 1996. Available: <http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/di96/di1156.html>.

¹⁶¹ Richard Holbrooke, "America and the Post Post-Cold War," address to the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, June 5, 1996. Available: http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/~ksgpress/ksg_news/transcripts/hollbrook.htm. Regarding the precise application of airpower, over 90% of the weapons used in Operation Deliberate Force were precision-guided; there was not a single collateral damage death of an innocent civilian in the Bosnia campaign. Richard Hallion, U.S. Air Force Historian, quoted in Rowan Scarborough, "U.S. Taught Weapons to be Much Smarter," *The Washington Times*, February 25, 1998, p. 1.

¹⁶² Lt. Colonel John Feeley, Director of European Affairs, National Security Council, 1995-1998, telephonic interview by author, March 5, 1998.

¹⁶³ Galvin.

¹⁶⁴ Perry, "The Enduring, Dynamic Relationship that is NATO."

¹⁶⁵ "Declaration of the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council held at NATO Headquarters, Brussels, on 10-11 January, 1994," *NATO Press Releases* 1994. available: gopher://gopher.nato.int/00/natodata/PRESS/NATOPRESS/PRESS-94/sum94dec.eng.

¹⁶⁶ French General Phillipe Morillon, former UN commander in Bosnia, quoted in Jim Hoagland, "Even America Gets the Blues," *The Washington Post*, December 14, 1993, p. A25.

¹⁶⁷ Richard Holbrooke, remarks to the Joan Shorenstein Center for Press, Politics, and Public Policy, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, April 30, 1998. Author's personal notes.

¹⁶⁸ William Perry, "The Ethical Use of Military Force," *Defense Issues*, Vol. 10, No. 49, April 18, 1995. Available: <http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/di95/di1049.html>.

¹⁶⁹ Air superiority provides military forces the freedom to attack and the freedom to attack; the presence of surface-to-air missiles in a no-fly zone inhibits that freedom, and runs counter to the reason for establishing both no-fly zones in Iraq – to protect U.S. aircraft monitoring compliance with UNSCR 688.

¹⁷⁰ "The Weinberger Doctrine," *The Washington Post*, November 30, 1984, p. A18.

¹⁷¹ Colin Powell, "U.S. Forces: Challenges Ahead; Enormous Power, Sobering Responsibility," *Foreign Affairs*, (Winter, 1992).

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

¹⁷³ "I've said this many times, and I'll say it again, airpower was decisive in this war." Colin Powell, quoted in *Air and Space Power Mentoring Guide* (Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama: Air University Press, 1997), p. 17.

¹⁷⁴ George H. W. Bush, "Letter to Congressional leaders on the Situation in the Persian Gulf," July 16, 1991, *The George Bush Presidential Library*. Available: <http://www.csdl.tamu.edu/bushlib/papers/1991/91071602.html>.

¹⁷⁵ Bush, "Remarks on Assistance for Iraqi Refugees and a News Conference," and George H. W. Bush, "Remarks at an Arbor Day Tree-Planting Ceremony and an Exchange with Reporters," April 26, 1991, *The George Bush Presidential Library*. Available: <http://www.csdl.tamu.edu/bushlib/papers/1991/91042600.html>.

¹⁷⁶ Clausewitz, p. 579.

¹⁷⁷ Colin Powell, quoted in Stephen Budiansky and others, "Saddam's Revenge," *U.S. News & World Report*, April 15, 1991, p. 26.

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¹⁸⁰ Colin Powell, quoted by Michael R. Gordon, "Powell Delivers a Resounding No on Using Limited Force in Bosnia," *The New York Times*, September 28, 1992, p. A1.

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¹⁸² Michael R. Gordon, "Man in the News; Pathfinders of the Middle Ground: Leslie Aspin Jr.," *The New York Times*, December 23, 1992, p. A1.

¹⁸³ Madeleine Albright, quoted in Powell, *My American Journey*, p. 576.

¹⁸⁴ Madeleine Albright, quoted in Stephen Robinson, "Pentagon Rethinks Foreign Policy," *The Daily Telegraph*, December 11, 1996, p. 13.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Michael Dobbs, "'Clinton Doctrine' on Use of U.S. Troops Visible in Bosnia, Africa Missions," *The Washington Post*, November 16, 1996, p. A20.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ There are also legal ramifications (i.e., proportionality) to asymmetrical retaliation. See Schmitt, *The Law of Military Operations*, pp. 246-261.

¹⁸⁹ Rhoula Khalaf, "U.S. urges Iraq not to defy no-fly zone: Saddam to send helicopters for pilgrims," *Financial Times*, April 22, 1997, p. 1.

¹⁹⁰ Eisenstadt, p. 54, and Cordesman and Hashim, p. 263.

¹⁹¹ Cordesman and Hashim, p. 263.

¹⁹² Fogleman, 1998.

¹⁹³ Ambassador Robert Blackwill, Lecturer in Public Policy, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, interview by author, March 4, 1998, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

¹⁹⁴ Hans A. Binnendjik and Patrick L. Clawson, eds., *Strategic Assessment 1997: Flashpoints and Force Structure* (Washington D.C.: Institute for National Strategic Studies, 1997), pp. 92-93.

¹⁹⁵ For a comprehensive review of the threat posed by terrorist use of nuclear weapons see Graham T. Allison, *Avoiding Nuclear Anarchy: Containing the threat of loose Russian nuclear weapons and fissile material*, John F. Kennedy School of Government Center for Science and International Affairs, Studies in International Security, No. 12 (Cambridge, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1996).

¹⁹⁶ Dr. Elliot Cohen, Professor and Director of Strategic Studies, The Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, interview by author, March 31, 1998, Washington D.C.

¹⁹⁷ Carl Builder, "Doctrinal Frontiers," *Airpower Journal*, No. 4 (Winter 1995). Available: <http://www.airpower.maxwell.af.mil/airchronicles/apj/builder.html>.

¹⁹⁸ William Mitchell, *Winged Defense* (New York: Putnam's, 1925; reprint edition, New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1988), pp. 20-21.

¹⁹⁹ Dr. Ashton Carter, Ford Foundation Professor of Science and International Affairs, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, interview by author, March 26, 1998, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

²⁰⁰ Fogleman, 1998.

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